

## **Good Citizens!** - *Christian Citizenship in a Secular Society*

### I. **Announce:**

- A. **Slide#1** Play FTS Video - FTS: Families that SOAR. Oct.7th
- B. **Slide#2** Children's Ministry Help needed Sun & Wed.
- C. **Slide#3** Sheryl Mazzocchio, owner of *Tresino's*, has started a **women's outreach** at her restaurant. 1st Sat of the month. Kelly sharing this Saturday. **8:30am. Free. Bring an unsaved friend.**
- D. **Slide#4** We are pleased to announce a *Christ centered recovery program* is going to begin soon.
  - 1. We are asking for people who have been a part of a recovery program to **pray** if God is **calling you** to be a part of this new ministry.
  - 2. **More details will be coming in the next couple of weeks as to how you can belong and participate in this new ministry.** More info see Pastor Dan in info booth.
  - 3. Please **pray** for this new ministry. **Or** come be **Part of the Team.** **Celebrate Recovery.**
- E. **Prayer:** As Paul told Titus, *Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good.*

### II. **Slide#5 Intro:**

- A. Ok Paul, now what are the believers responsibilities towards society?
- B. I started learning about **politics** the hard way.
  - 1. As newlyweds in mid 80's, Kelly & I went to see her sister in the Sonoma area (No.Ca)
  - 2. We had a **blue Datsun B-210 wagon** & emblazoned on the back of our car was a bumper sticker that read *President Reagan Votes for Jesus Christ!*
    - a) It didn't go over very well in Northern Cal.
- C. **And if you haven't noticed yet...we don't live under a *Christian* government.**
  - 1. But, Paul makes it clear we are not to take **an anti-government** mentality. **Nor** organize the "**Murrieta Militia**"!
  - 2. **We are not to see government as our enemy or as the Devil's tool.**
  - 3. **Slide#6** **We walk a tightrope between church & state.**
  - 4. He also doesn't want us to have an **uninvolved indifference!** (i.e. "We're not of this world!")
    - a) And so some have determined **not** to worry at all, **not** vote, **not** pray...a, "*hey, God'll sort it all out in the end*" mentality.
- D. **How do we figure this all out? How do we develop a godly perspective? How do we interact w/ a society that clashes w/God's standards? [Let's see!]**
- E. **Title: *Good Citizens!* - Subtitle: *Christian Citizenship in a Secular Society.***

- F. **Slide#7 Outline:** *Good Citizens for God's Sake; Good Citizens for Your Own Sake; Good Citizens for Conscience Sake.*
- G. **Slide#8 Overview:** Daniel Webster, Whatever makes men good Christians makes them good Citizens!
1. **Christians** have the responsibility to make their country, wherever they live...**better!**
    - a) We can do this by **electing** Christians **or** other high-principled leaders!
    - b) We can do this **morally**, by serving as an influence for good in society!

### III. **Slide#9 GOOD CITIZENS FOR GOD'S SAKE! (1,2)**

- A. Yes, believers are **citizens of heaven**, **but** we must not minimize our **responsibilities on earth!**<sup>1</sup>
1. **Allegiance to God** **does not** take away our responsibility to **secular authority**.
  2. We must be *exemplary citizens* so that **the Lord will be glorified**.
- B. (1) **Be subject** – The predominant thought is *not obedience* but the conduct that flows naturally from the recognition that, the other person as **Christ's representative**, has an infinitely greater claim on one, than one has on oneself.<sup>2</sup>
1. Just like church leaders, **Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.** Heb.13:17
- C. **To governing authorities** – Note what he **doesn't** say.
1. Paul doesn't give **the type** of government to submit to.
  2. He doesn't specify a **Democracy**, or **Socialist**, or **Totalitarian** gov.
  3. **Democracy isn't** the best Government anyway...**Theocracy is!**
    - a) **Slide#10** 1 Sam.8:5,7 (Israel to Samuel) **Look, you are old, & your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations... And the LORD said to Samuel, Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.** (A Theocracy, i.e. governed by God)
  4. So, since Paul doesn't give the type of government to submit to...believers are to submit to **whatever form** of government they reside under.
    - a) **Slide#11** Admittedly, government doesn't always make sense, like this image here. *School & Prison, both government institutions. School forbids reading the bible. In he prison its encouraged! Irony.*
- D. (2) To resist rulers is to resist the ordinance of God, which brings judgment.
1. **Note:** it **wasn't** Paul's purpose here to explain *the other side*... [i.e. what is the responsibility of the state]

<sup>1</sup> Warren Wiersbe, pg.470.

<sup>2</sup> Carnfield, quote from Mounce in Romans, pg.62.

2. Or, When is civil disobedience right? – Like Peter & John touch on in Acts 4:19,20(NIV) Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey **you** rather than **God**. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.
3. Paul was **not** advising believers on how to deal w/**rebellious government** but w/**rebellious believers!!!**
  - a) Government authority comes from God, so you must respect **the office** even if you cannot respect **the officer**.

#### IV. Slide#12 **GOOD CITIZENS FOR YOUR OWN SAKE! (3,4)**

- A. (3) God has established human government because people are **sinners** & must be **controlled**.
  1. Government is God's way of maintaining the **public good** & **directing** the affairs of state.
  2. Rulers maintain order in society by **rewarding** good conduct & **punishing** wrongdoing
- B. (4) **God's minister/servant**(civil servants) to you!
- C. **Slide#13,14 Does not bear the sword in vain** – (the form of execution at the time)
  1. Roman officials had **sabers** carried in front of them as a constant reminder that they held the power of life & death.
  2. **Maybe today...**“he does not **throw the switch** in vain!” “does not **lethally inject** in vain!” “does not use **lethal gas** in vain!”
  3. **God has given the authority of capitol punishment** to the civil government.
    - a) God to Noah & sons, Gen.9:6 **Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; (why?) For in the image of God He made man.**
    - b) **Capitol punishment is the ultimate manifestation of the states authority to enforce order!**
  4. Good Christians that **obey** the law & **refrain** from evil, have nothing to worry about!
- D. **The fear of punishment** is not the **highest** motivation for obedience, **but** it is better than having **chaos & anarchy**.

#### V. Slide#15 **GOOD CITIZENS FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE! (5-7)**

- A. (5) **Wrath...**a motivation for obedience, **but** even better **conscience!**
- B. **A Godly conscience** – A God directed conscience!
  1. Not Fox News directed. Not CNN directed. Not TV adds at election time directed. Not even your Pastor's opinion directed. **A God directed conscience!**
  2. **Slide#16** Oh, that Christian's would vote our **conscience!!!**
    - a) This November, **know** what candidates stand for.
    - b) Weigh the candidates **values** *against* the **life principles** found in God's word.
    - c) Choose the candidates whose views **most closely match**.

d) **Educate yourself** on the different **issues & propositions** at hand.

e) **Slide#17** Billy Graham was asked, **the Bible doesn't say you have to vote, does it?** - His answer: "No, the Bible doesn't directly command us to vote - **because** people who lived in Bible times couldn't vote. **But** the Bible **does command us** to be *good citizens* - and one of the ways we do this today is by **voting**. In fact, if we **don't** vote, we are failing to fulfill that God-given responsibility to be *good citizens*. The Bible says that Mordecai, Esther's uncle, was honored "because he worked for the good of his people" (Esther 10:3). Shouldn't we also work for the good of our nation? - Don't look on voting only as a **responsibility**, however. Look on it also as an **opportunity** - an opportunity hundreds of millions of people in our world wish they had.

C. **Slide#18,19** Is the issue **what Party I vote?** Republican, Democrat, Green, Independent, Tea Party. A new one that many Christians are joining...*The Holy Water Party*. jk!

1. No! The issues is **Natural Law** vs. **Positive Law**.

a) See, the bible teaches there is a **Law** above the law!

b) Society is pushing the opposite!

2. **Positive Law** - is municipal law, that is, a system of rules established by the governmental power of a state.

3. **Natural Law** – refers to the standard of conduct that transcends human authority.  
[It is a **Law** above the law]

a) **Christians should have no problem with this according to our text this morning!**

b) President Lincoln said, "we've been given certain rights by our creator."

4. **If you want to take away 1 Nation Under God then who on earth will we be under?**

a) **1 nation under the state? Under the Federal government?**

b) There better be a **power higher** than ourselves.

(1) If it is a power **of ourselves** then, the same people that **gave the power** can **take that power away**.

D. So, the question between the 2 views: **Do human governments create moral law or discover it?**

1. The founders of the U.S. put it into the Declaration: "**all men are created equal**". They understood the nation' freedom & existence were based upon God as Creator.

2. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator w/certain unalienable rights"<sub>[non-transferable, can't surrender these rts]</sub>

E. **Pay taxes in Greek?** = "pay taxes!" :)

1. Christian's are obligated to pay taxes to support the governing authorities. This is their "**management fee**" for their **order & protection** they furnish.

F. Was this just Paul's command?

1. **Nope!** When Jesus was asked, "*Taxes, to pay or not to pay?*"
2. His answer was, **Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.** Mark12:17
3. The Jewish priesthood in our Lord's time was **very corrupt**, but Jesus approved of the **widow** paying her Temple Tax. Lk.21:2,3

G. But what about when my taxes are being used for things I disagree with? Even then???

1. **Some Patriots** don't believe in spending money on **foreign aid**.
2. **Some Pacifist** feel it is wrong/immoral to **support the military**.
3. **Most all of us** here believe it is *criminal* that state or federal funds are used to pay for **abortions**.

H. But now think of who penned these words! – What were **Paul & the Roman Christian's** taxes going toward in Rome in that day?

1. **Slide#20 Consider the abortion issue just after Paul's day:** I quote from a medical book in the 2nd century ad. By the Greek physician **Soranus**, who specialized in gynecology, obstetrics, & pediatrics. "*In order to dislodge the embryo, the woman should take strenuous walks & be shaken up by draft animals. She should also make violent leaps in the air & lift objects which are too heavy for her...If this is ineffective, she should be placed in a mixture, which has 1st been boiled & purified, of linseed, fenugreek, mallow, marsh-mallow, & wormwood. She should use poultices of the same substances & be treated w/infusions of olive oil, alone or mixed w/rue, honey, iris, or wormwood.*"
  - a) **An ugly practice then, as well as now.** **But**, it does not give us the right to take the laws into our own hands.
  - b) **Rather it should give us the drive to do everything we can to change the law – through peaceful, & legal means.**
2. **So yes**, we are even supposed to pay taxes even when we **disagree** with the way the money is spent.
  - a) **Ps:** In Paul's day Roman tax didn't only build their famous **roadways**...but also to erect & maintain **temples** devoted to the worship of the Roman Emperor. [hardly a project Paul would have endorsed!]

I. We are also supposed to **respect & honor** them!

1. And when you can't the officer, you can the office!

J. **Slide#21a** Biblical Challenge for Godly Citizens?

- K. **[1] Pray** for our Country! Jer.29:7 **seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive**(i.e. Babylon), **& pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.**
1. **Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.** Psalm 33:12

2. **Historically**, this country's faith has sustained us through the **wars** that we've experienced and the **crises** that have come our way. We turned to God when we were attacked on 9/11. The churches were full. **Historically**, America has called on Him when we have had a need.
- L. **Slide#21b [2] Vote your Godly Conscience & Biblical Morals & Ethics!**
1. "It is safe to say that **less than 1/2** of professing Christians vote in a given election."
  2. Imagine the impact believers could have on our government, its leadership, & our nation if we all registered to vote & voted our values!
  3. It **isn't** my goal, my job, nor my education to stand up here & tell you **how to vote about politics & the economy**. **But...When it comes to legislating morality issues...** then I will speak out! **When it comes to being a voice for the voiceless** I will honor Prov.31:8,9 & do exactly that!
    - a) **Slide#22 Ex: Yes on 35!** - Stop Human Trafficking in California:
    - b) **It protects children in California by:**
      - (1) Increasing prison terms for human traffickers.
      - (2) Requiring convicted sex traffickers to register as sex offenders.
      - (3) Requiring all registered sex offenders to disclose their internet accounts.
      - (4) Requiring criminal fines from convicted human traffickers to pay for services to help victims.
- M. **Slide#23a [3] Support ministries like *Advocates Faith & Freedom***, who defends our religious Liberties. (Robert Tyler; Jennifer Monk)
- N. **Slide#23b [4] Hold tenaciously to the Word of God** - for it is our only *Homeland Security!*
- O. **Slide#24,25** Instead of politicizing churches, we should apply C.S. Lewis' dictum: "Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither."