

A Spiritual Voting Booth

by Rick Leibee

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the two kingdoms - the spiritual kingdom of God and the earthly kingdom of this world - and how Christians should relate to the government of the land they live in.

Duration: 1:38:00

Scripture: Exodus 21:24, Matthew 5:5-26, Romans 12:19, Colossians 3:8, 1 Peter 2:9

Topics: "Family Discipleship", "Christian Witness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of fathers teaching biblical truths and doctrines in their homes. He warns that without proper teaching, young people may be drawn to wasteful and harmful pursuits. The speaker acknowledges that an hour is not enough time to delve deeply into these teachings, but encourages fathers to regularly discuss and apply them in their homes. He also addresses the divisive nature of political campaigns and urges believers to demonstrate love and avoid engaging in evil speaking during these times.

Transcript

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Praise ye the Lord. How many here this morning were here last week? Okay, most of you were here. So how'd it go this week? Did you have a hot heart? Did anybody reach the boiling point with fervor? Remember the definition of fervor? Amen.

I trust you did. I had a good week in the Lord. I'm thankful for His mercies.

God has blessed us already this morning, hasn't He? Beautiful worship and very simple but profound opening. That we need to hear that again, don't we? And again, and we need to say those things again

and again. We need to confess those things with our mouth and with our hearts, don't we? And I'm thankful for those that shared, and I do trust that there were many more of you that had time allowed.

You would have shared as well. Amen. Well, this morning I have a message that I'd like to share.

Let me maybe begin with laying it out a little bit with a few questions and a few thoughts. We are, it seems, in our land here that we are temporarily in, America, we're in a very dramatic and aggressive battle. It is a battle, a campaign that is dividing our country.

And in some cases it divides states, families, sometimes even church members from one another. Sometimes with great emotion and zeal and a very aggressive attitude as well. It is a battle.

I did a little research and found out that in the past 12 to 14 months that this battle has been raging, that both sides will have spent, not individually, but together, collectively, both sides will have spent well over one billion dollars to wage this war, to wage this battle. Over one billion dollars. I don't even know how much money that is.

I say that, but I don't know what that means. But I do know that's a lot of money, isn't it? What is that, a thousand millions or a million millions? It says a thousand millions. Okay, I do a little better with millions, although that's too much too.

But it's a thousand million dollars. That's amazing, isn't it? And in this contest, two opposing groups or parties will seek to do something. Let me read you what they are going to seek to do.

This is an encyclopedia. It's very interesting that it's called... See what the name of this book is? It's an encyclopedia. They know who they are, don't they? You ever notice that? Y'all ever amused by things like that? Political party... These are the two people that are fighting as political parties.

This is an organized group of people who control or seek to control a government to set forth their own agenda. That's their definition. I mean, that's pretty straightforward, isn't it? What am I describing? What am I describing? What battle has been raging for the last 12 to 14 months? What is it? Presidential race or election or campaign.

I had planned to share on this topic on a Wednesday night. But the fact that our brother is meeting, I think I said it would be this Wednesday night. But I made a mistake.

I didn't pull out my schedule. And I'm going to be away this Wednesday. I'm going to be in Tennessee going down there to the church once again.

So, I felt like the Lord had laid the burden on my heart. I actually didn't decide until yesterday afternoon to share on it. I had another message I had almost finished preparing.

And then I just couldn't come to peace about it. And this thing came back up and I just felt like this is what the Lord would have me to do. So, I did share a very similar message about four years ago.

But I do feel like it's so important that we need to look at it again. I have received in the last two or three months a number of phone calls and been asked even here at our church by people that are here, some visitors, some not, do I vote? First of all, the answer to that, no, I do not vote. I do not vote.

But the other thing that I was asked is why. And sometimes I was able to share a few thoughts, but never given enough time to really explain it. So, I'm going to take enough time this morning to explain why a Christian, not just me, but why a Christian should not be involved in civil government.

Because the question isn't should a Christian vote? The question is far, far bigger than that. It's far bigger. The question is far, far bigger than voting.

The question is what is the involvement or what should be the involvement or what should be the relationship of a true child of God to the government of the land that He lives in. And it doesn't have to be America. You know, there's Christians living in hundreds of different nations all over this earth, this globe at this moment.

And they all have to answer this question. Some are in a dictatorship. Some are still in communism.

Some are in other governments that are similar to ours. Some of them have a king, an earthly king. But they still have to decide how are they going to relate to the government of the land that they live in.

It's a critical message. And it's tempting, I know. I've heard some of the conversations.

It's tempting at a time like this to, without meaning to, to be drawn into it, isn't it? To take sides a little bit. To kind of lean one way or the other to assess the rights and wrongs of the two different sides of the political debate. And after all, many of the things they talk about and do aren't going to affect us one way or the other, right? I mean, they do affect us.

And it's a real temptation for the child of God at some level to get involved. We do have opinions, don't we? We have opinions. We have thoughts.

We have goals. We have things that we're interested in. And we realize, possibly, that one candidate may actually represent some of the things we believe in a bit better than the other one.

And so the temptation is tugging a little bit at some of our hearts, I fear. But may God in heaven help us to see the eternal purposes of our King and how vastly they are different than any government on any continent in this world. And so the struggle, how to relate to government, is what is our place, what is our participation in the governing of the land we find ourselves living in.

I'll begin this morning with looking at three very basic biblical principles that I trust will clearly show why a child of God cannot participate in the government of any land in which they live in. We are, I believe the Bible shows very clearly, and the Spirit of Christ is going to make it clear, to be non-participants in the governing of earthly kingdoms or earthly nations. We are to be non-participants in those type of relationships.

And how many fathers do I have here this morning? Raise your hand, fathers. Wow, can't count that many. Maybe 50 or more.

Fathers, would you sit up and listen extra hard this morning? Because in the hour that I have, I cannot do the job that I need to do. And if you are not teaching this, these truths, these doctrines in your home from time to time, in a way that is real, in a way that has application, you will grow up, you will have young people growing up in your home that will be confused and be drawn to things that, may I say, will be a complete waste of their time and a drain upon the kingdom of God. So we look at it here maybe every

three or four or five years in a bit of an in-depth way, but an hour really isn't very in-depth, is it? And that isn't going to do it.

So I need you to get involved because you may not know it, but I hope you do, but much of the homeschool material that is out there today, that's even in some of your homes probably, if you have a BECCA or Bob Jones or ATIA or School of Tomorrow, if you have that in your home, they're teaching an agenda to participate in the government. It's hidden under things called patriotism and I don't know what all they call it, but it's in there, isn't it? Have you seen some of it? So if that's in your home and you are not correcting it with right doctrine, you are making a mistake. So I beg you fathers that just raised your hand, you listen extra hard this morning because you do know, fathers, don't you, that I am not the teacher of your children.

That is not my job. You are the primary teacher of your children in these things. Don't think they're going to get it because Brother Rick preaches on it once every three or four or five years.

That will not do. That will not do. Well, anyway, the first principle that we must understand.

Turn to Matthew 4. Matthew 4. And we'll begin here in verse 8. Now before I read that, the first principle is this. The principle that there are two kingdoms. The two kingdom principle is very critical.

The principle of two kingdoms is vital to our way of seeing and living out Bible truth. Every Christian and every child in a godly home must see clearly. I remember when I was born again, I did not see this clearly the first three or four or five years I was born again.

I didn't really even have any teaching. But as I began to read the Bible and as I began to get some other information, it began to dawn on me, something is not lining up here. Something is not working out here.

What is wrong? And one of the things that I discovered, I actually read a book by a man who was not an Anabaptist and the name of the book was called, If the World Fits, You're the Wrong Size. And that sounds like a funny title, but I've never forgotten it. I read that book.

I think we'd only been a Christian maybe three or four years. We hadn't really run into even Anabaptist people, I don't think, at that time. And we began to question and think, something is wrong with the way Christianity is trying to be part of this.

And we didn't have all the definitions. We didn't know what we were seeing at first, but we began to learn. And as we learned it and understood it and saw it from God's heart, it helped change our Christian life.

So it's vital that you get this. Let's look here. Why don't you stand with me here and let's look at Matthew 4. We'll begin here in verse 8, Matthew 4. And I think let's read through verse 10.

Why don't you read this with me? Matthew 4, verse 8, we'll begin through 10. Read with me. Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them and saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Amen. You may be seated.

A very simple three verses on this encounter between Jesus and Satan. Let me ask you a question. Could not have Jesus taken over the kingdoms of this world if He wanted to? Was that within His power? Did He

need Satan even to give Him that power? Did He have the power? Could He have done it? Absolutely! He's Jesus.

He could have taken over. But it's interesting that Satan thought the kingdoms of this world were basically under His power. But what's really more interesting is Jesus didn't rebuke him and say, You're lying, devil, they're yours to give away.

I mean, what's not there is as shocking as what is there, isn't it? Jesus didn't say, They're not yours to give, Satan. Did He? I don't know what to do with all that theology. I don't like to think that Satan is in control of all the nations of the world.

And I'm not saying that, but it's a point we need to consider a little bit this morning. What is happening here? But Jesus did do this. He refused it, didn't He? He refused it.

And He actually rebuked the idea. He rebuked the idea. Get thee hence.

What He's saying is, No, no, no. That is not what we're trying to do. Back in Israel's day, David, he went out conquering and taking on nations and captured them and made them part of the kingdom of Israel, right? And it was okay under that dispensation.

But here, when Satan says, Let's get some kingdoms and make them part of you, Jesus says, Get thee hence, Satan. So, He is not doing that. We don't turn there, but in John 6.15, right after He feed the 5,000, it says, When Jesus therefore perceived that they, the people that He had fed, would come and take Him by force to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone.

So, Jesus could have had the kingdoms of this world by power or force, or He could have done it by popular opinion. I mean, the people wanted Him to be the king. I mean, they would have voted for Him right now.

Talk about election Tuesday. I mean, they wanted Him. They were going to just make it happen.

I mean, He could have been very popular. When He came into Israel, or Jerusalem, on Palm Sunday, it seems like the whole city was there to crown Him king, right? I mean, He could have just said, Right, put me on that throne. I'm going to be a king of a nation of this world.

And we're going to get other nations to be in our kingdom. Did He do that? No. He didn't do that.

He didn't do that. And again, the reason I'm bringing up Jesus here is, well, turn over to Philippians chapter 2. Jesus is our pattern. He is our way of living.

He is our life. He is our way of thinking. And we need to see that when Jesus was faced with this whole idea of either participating in the government or not participating in the government, He ran into it in His life, right? And we are to walk like Jesus, right? So how did Jesus... What did He do when He ran into opportunities to participate in the government of this world? I mean, these are just two verses.

We could go to verse after verse after verse. But Jesus is our model, and so look at Philippians. We'll just see this here in Philippians 2. The reason I'm bringing this up, Philippians 2 verse... Where am I at here? Verse 5. Yes.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. What was His mind about governments of this world? Get the hints. So let the mind of Christ on this subject be in you this morning.

Now for the church, I would say to you, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation. You know, to be a politician, you know what you have to do? You have to build a big reputation. You've got to be popular.

Right? And took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and humbled Himself, and on and on, in obedience unto the death. That's not good politics, Jesus. Bad politics.

Bad politics. But right Christianity. But right Christ likeness.

So what mind is in you? What mind is in the world when it comes to participating in government? It doesn't line up, does it? And Jesus saw that clearly. Jesus saw that clearly. Have you ever thought, why did Jesus not give in and just take over the political kingdoms or governments of His day? Have you ever just thought, wouldn't that make life easier if everything were just Christian? I mean, He just took over all the governments.

Do you ever wonder why He didn't do that? He could have. He could have. Look over at Matthew 26.

He could have, but on the other hand, no, He couldn't. No, He couldn't. Because there was a greater power at work.

Turn over to John. John, John, John, chapter 18. Yes, that's where I want to go.

John 18, excuse me. Turn to John 18. John 18.

33. John 18, 33. Look at this.

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again and called Jesus and said unto Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews? Now notice what he's asking here. Just meditate on this for just a second. He's asking Him, Are You in charge of the government? Are You the one that the power of the government rests in You? Of what? When He says of the Jews, what does He mean? He means Israel, right? He means the Jewish, what we call Israel today.

I guess they were in Judea really here because they were in Jerusalem. But He means the Israelite nation, what we call the Jews, okay? Jesus answered Him saying, Sayest thou this thing of thyself or did others tell it of thee? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done? Jesus answered.

So now Jesus gets back to answering the question. What does He say? My kingdom. Now He doesn't deny that He's a king because He says, My kingdom.

My kingdom. Does He have a kingdom? Yes, because if you're a king, you have a kingdom. And if there's a kingdom, you have a king.

We have a king. He says, My kingdom. He has one.

But what does He say about it? My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight and I should not be delivered to the Jews to an earthly kingdom? But now is My

kingdom not from hence. I mean, is that clear? Do you see what Jesus is saying? There is a kingdom.

And He is the king. But this is not My kingdom. And neither is America.

Neither is America. It wasn't when it was founded in 1776. And it wasn't in 1876 or 1976 or 2004.

Despite what propaganda the mainline churches of our day try to put forth. It's not. It never has been.

And it never will be. Look over to Colossians 1. Now that's Jesus. And you might say, Well, that's Jesus.

But what about me? I live in this kingdom. I'm part of this kingdom. And physically you are.

But look at verse 13. Actually, stand up. I'm going to make you read this too because this is about you.

Stand up. Colossians 1. Verse 13. Colossians 1. Verse 13.

We'll start with the word who there. Read with me. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

Okay, you may be seated. Okay. Where are you, Christian? I'm not asking who you are.

Where are you? Where are you? You're in the kingdom according to the Word of God. Is the Word of God true? That's talking about spiritual reality. Which is the greater reality in your life? Physically that you live within the borders of the U.S. of A. Or that you have been translated here means to carry over, to be removed from one place, and actually it means to be deposited in another.

Where are you deposited? What are you banking on, in other words? I hope, according to your testimonies this morning, it's not America. Is it? I hope not. And so, just like Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world.

Put this mind in you that was in Him. You have to say this morning, you must say, My kingdom is not of this world either. Because you're translated into it.

We must see. See what I'm saying? How vital and important it is that you have this thing clearly understood in your mind and your heart that there are two kingdoms. And which kingdom you are in.

Which kingdom you are in. It's vital because without it, there will be much, much, much misapplication and error in the way you interpret the Word of God. Many, many mainline churches are in grave error in the way they view the Word of God because they do not see this clear, simple principle.

It's like they just miss it. Now we can point to the old days and see it clearly. Things like all of us here would look at the Crusades and go, Oh, they were deceived.

But they were deceived because they didn't see this principle just like today. Many mainline Christians are deceived. They wouldn't go on a crusade.

Well, maybe they would with Osama Bin Laden. I guess we are kind of on a crusade, aren't we? Yeah, maybe we're just the same after all, aren't we? Maybe we're not so different than those that went on the Crusades. My kingdom is not of this world.

There are two kingdoms. Otherwise, you don't need to be saved out of the one to be translated to the other. This is very simple, isn't it? It's not that hard.

And yet, many miss this. Two kingdoms. Two citizenships.

Right? Have you been born again and translated into the kingdom of Jesus? There are two constitutions. There's the Constitution of the United States of America. And then there's our Constitution, which is greater, which has greater sway and say in your life.

There are two registrations. I read this last week in the paper that there's people just running, flocking to register to vote. There's voter registration.

There's also a registration in Jesus' kingdom. It's called the Lamb's Book of Life. Is your name written there? I wish there was a rush to get their names written there.

There's two voting booths. The world... have you ever been to a voting booth? I have before I was born again. It's usually a little thing about five by five about like this.

There's a little table and there's a curtain around it. They draw the curtain. They make a big deal.

This is private. This is between you and your own conscience. You vote your conscience, they say.

You go in that secret place. We have a voting booth too. But it's a tear-stained rug in a private place.

But there's something different about our voting booth. That one's only open once every four years. Ours is open 365 days, 24 hours a day, and on and on and on.

Which one do you want to vote in? Come on. Come on. Two kingdoms.

Two voting booths. Two constitutions. Which one do you choose today? It's that simple.

You must choose. You cannot have both. May I say very carefully, that is a lie perpetrated by many mainline churches.

I say that carefully. I'm not against those. I have many friends there that I love.

But they're wrong. You must choose. Where does your allegiance lie? Where are you going to spend your time, your money, your heart, your soul? What are you going to be hot for? There are people so hot over this presidential race, it's mind-boggling to me.

They shame us in their fervor sometimes. Shame on us. Turn to Hebrews 11.

You must choose. In Hebrews 11, we have this quote-unquote famous passage chapter. Here I think our family, at Family Verses and Song, when was that? About a month ago, quoted I think the whole chapter, didn't we? And in the middle of that chapter, it's very interesting.

These heroes of the faith we call them, men and women, Old and New Testament, or some are mentioned here actually a little bit. Most of them are Old Testament. But it's interesting that even though they were under different dispensation, it's very interesting some of the wording that's used here starting in verse 13.

Look at this with me very carefully and think about this with me. Look at verse 13 of chapter 11 in Hebrews. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

And the word stranger means what you think it means. It doesn't mean they were strange looking. It means they didn't belong.

They were aliens. The word is alien. They were aliens.

Okay? Now watch verse 14. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out... Notice the phrasing.

They came out of a country. Have you come out of the country you were born in? Have you been translated? They might have had opportunity to have returned. The sad case about too many American Christians is they keep returning to America.

They need to get out of America. Or maybe they need to get America out of their heart. And I'm not saying that because I'm against America.

But do you know you can be a Christian in China? Do you know that? You can be a Christian in Japan. This is not a Christian nation. This is not a Christian nation.

There is no such thing. We seek a better country. But now they desire a better country.

That is unheavenly. Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city. What are you looking for? What are you living for? Do you seek a better country? Are you already a citizen of that country? One of the problems with modern churches is that they are not strangers.

They are not strangers. They look like the world. They act like the world.

And they have fully brought the world into the church. They're not leaving it. They're not from hence.

They're in it. And it is in them. And it's causing much confusion.

Much confusion. Don't turn here, but 2 Corinthians 5, remember the principle here is two kingdoms. It says, Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.

You have been given a new title, a new job description. Ambassador. What is an ambassador? What is an ambassador? Somebody that what? Represents what? Represents another country.

Represents your country to another country, right? If I'm an ambassador from Greece to England, that means I moved to England. Am I English? No. Do I vote in England? No.

Is my citizenship in England? I live there. But no, I represent the country that I'm from there. I'm only there to represent the interests of my king.

And of my nation. That's all I'm there for. That's all I'm there for.

I'm just an ambassador. I remember, think of it this way with me for a moment. In 1978 and 1979, I moved to England and lived there a little bit over a year with my wife.

We didn't have any children at that time. Our first child, Weston, wasn't born until 1980. And while I lived there, I had to get a special visa to live there.

I had to get a passport. And while I was there, they were in the middle of a very hotly contested election for their prime minister. They were also fighting a little war.

I think it was down in the Falkland Islands or somewhere like that. And they were calling. They wanted people to sign up for the army.

They wanted people to vote. They wanted people to give money. You know, I didn't give any money while I was there.

I didn't vote. I didn't sign up to fight in their army. Why? I was making money there.

I was renting a house there. You know, I even had an English accent when I lived there. I liked their food.

I mean, I sort of looked outwardly. I dressed like them. I sort of looked English.

But I wasn't. I had no business getting entangled in their affairs. And you have no business getting entangled.

You have been translated to another kingdom. And you have no business getting entangled in the participation and the running of the government of this. I had no business.

And it wasn't my business to get involved in England. And it's not your business to get involved in a presidential election. It was not my home.

It was not my home. One of my children, Caleb, I think it was a few years ago, wrote a little song called, This is Not My Home. Remember that, Caleb? This is not my home.

You know, it's a simple truth. But we forget, don't we? Because we do live in this house of clay. And we do live in America.

And you and I are born here. And I am a citizen of the United States. And that's okay.

And so, in a way, I have a bit of a dual citizenship. But the question I'm asking you this morning, where is your highest loyalty? Where is the thing that has the weight in your life that pulls you, that makes your decisions in how you live your life? I know we do have to obey the law of the land. I'm not speaking against America.

Please do not misunderstand me. I pay my taxes unto Caesar. I obey the speed limits.

I pray for the leaders. I do not fight against the laws of this land. But I will obey God rather than man if there is a law.

And I believe there are some already being passed and coming which go directly against the Word of God. Those I will not be able to obey. Even though I live here.

Even though I live here. Alright. Let's move on to the second principle.

And all these are related quite a bit. But there's enough of a distinction. I want you to make a distinction in your minds.

Turn over to 1 Peter 2. 1 Peter 2. I want to read one verse here and then another verse in another place. And I'll give you the second principle. Here in chapter 2, verse 9. 1 Peter 2, verse 9. The Bible says, And who is the ye here? Who is the ye? You.

It's Christians. If you're here today and you're born again by faith and you could give a testimony during Brother Philip's message, you're the ye. You're the ye.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation. You are a nation. But what nation are you and what are you for? A royal priesthood and holy nation.

A peculiar people that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. And then turn over to 2 Corinthians 6. 2 Corinthians 6. We'll start here in verse 14. 2 Corinthians 6, verse 14 says, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers? For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord? Concord means that you've made an agreement.

That you've made an agreement and you're going to move and work together. What concord hath Christ with Belial? Now watch this. Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? How can you join a political party and say you're a child of God? I'm sorry, you can't.

You cannot do it. And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? What is the temple of God today? Is it this building we're in? What is it? You, your body. You are the temple of God.

And what has the temple of God always been? Sanctified, holy, set apart only for the things of God. That is your life. For ye are the temple of the living God.

As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them. And I will be their God and they shall be My people. Wherefore, what? Come out from among them and be ye separate.

Sayeth the Lord. And touch not the unclean thing. And I will receive you and will be a Father unto you.

The second principle is the doctrine of separation. Be ye separate. Come out from among them.

You cannot participate, have concord with, align yourself with, join up with, connect with the political parties or the governments or any world systems that exist on the face of this earth, whether you're in America or England or Greece or Africa or China. It doesn't matter. You cannot do it.

According to the Word of God, because of the doctrine of separation. You are not your own. You were bought with a price.

You cannot do it. You don't have the right to choose to do that. And when you do, there is a misapplication and a misunderstanding of the very heart of God for what you're to be doing with your life.

Now the reason, I'll just give you this. You know the reason that there is so much confusion about this, between this whole thing of separation of, and I don't even like to say separation of church and state, but separation as it's given here, of the people of God who are born again and having concord with government or whatever, but we're talking about government today, is there's such a confusion about

what to do with the first two-thirds of this book, the Old Testament. But it's really not that hard.

Now think about it. When Abraham had his encounter with God and God called him to come out, what was the call to Abraham? Abraham, I will make you a nation. And he did.

See, the dispensation of the Old Testament was God spoke through prophets directly to the people and even to the leaders and told them what to do as a nation, didn't He? And they as a nation were to be a light unto the Gentiles. So God didn't speak necessarily just to individual men, although He did that some, but most of the conversation in the Old Testament, really, once you get past the first 20 verses of Genesis, is God speaking to a group of people as a group, as a nation, to do these things. And when they did wrong, how were they punished? As a nation.

They all went into captivity in Babylon, right? He dealt with them as a nation. And if there was a nation of people, you can look at Deuteronomy 20. We won't turn there for the sake of time.

He tells them to pick up the sword and to kill the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Jebusites because they as a nation were also the sword of God to bring justice upon sinful and heathen nations. But God dealt with them as a nation and judgment in their life was also very interesting. I hope you don't want this.

Immediate. You know, did you ever notice that? Judgment was not deferred until after their death. But judgment often came within their lifetime.

Very immediate. So, these are two different dispensations. In the Old Testament, God did that.

But in the New Testament, didn't you notice it's different? But there's a confusion. God spoke to the leaders about what to do with a nation. It was the time of the law.

But you know, something wonderful happened on the cross. Amen? A new covenant and a new relationship was established. Hallelujah.

Amen? Are you glad that we have a new dispensation? I don't want to be taken off into captivity into Iraq or Iran because of the sins. Do we have sins as a nation? Is homosexuality allowed as a nation? Is pornography allowed as a nation? Should we as a nation, if we were under the old dispensation, be punished whether or not you are in it or not? According to the Word of God, what would it say? Away with the whole nation. But we don't live like that.

Praise God. Now, God doesn't speak to our leaders through prophets. He speaks to each one individually through the Holy Spirit, guiding us in the way that we should go.

It's different, isn't it? I can guarantee you those people who want to get us politically involved in Christian circles, they don't really want what they're preaching. They don't. Because they would be swept away with everyone else.

It's not right. It's not right. This is important.

And that's why there are errors cropping up in our lands such as Reconstructionism, Dominionist theology, and we might want to think, oh, this can never happen to us. But it wasn't but about five years ago we lost three people, two from charity when we were there, to this kind of theology and teaching. And one, I think, was at Harmony, if I'm remembering right.

We lost three people in our own church. So don't think, well, that's for those guys. You know, that's why I warned you fathers, you must be teaching.

You must make sure this is understood or the error can come in your own home and in your own church. And don't think it cannot. Be careful.

Be careful. You look carefully and you will not see verses in the New Testament telling the government how to operate or how to behave. Are those verses there? But there's verses in the Old Testament telling the government how to behave.

But the verses aren't there in the New Testament. They tell you and I, we are a peculiar people, a priesthood. We are to show forth the glory of God.

Is America commanded in the New Testament to show forth the glory of God? It's not there, brothers and sisters. It's not there. Now there's people that pull a single verse out of the Old Testament trying to say, well, this is America.

Not true. It's not. It's not true.

We must be very careful. There is a very active fervor, a new zeal, it seems like in Christian circles, to get involved in government. Reconstructionists, Dominionists, anybody heard of the moral majority? The moral majority.

I mentioned to Becca, Bob Jones, and even some of our people in some of our churches go to ATIA, Bill Gothard. His first alert program, very patriotic, very pro-American. I remember when we were involved in the homeschool movement quite a bit in Florida, we had some very dear friends, I guess some of our best friends, they were in ATIA.

And I remember as I was learning this principle of the two kingdoms, one day we were driving down the road going somewhere and we saw our friends, I think they had 11 or 12 children, out on the road with big campaign signs, campaigning, and something turned in my heart. I think that was the day that I saw the two kingdoms so clear. Here were these godly, beautiful families.

I think I wept. I mean, I just went. And something in my spirit was just like, no, no, no.

And I asked them later, why did you do this? They said, well, you know, ATIA and Bill Gothard, they're pro-getting involved. They want us to get involved in electing the people so we'll get what we want. And I just said, brother, get on your knees and pray.

Your thinking is wrong. It's wrong. And I don't say that because I'm against everything Bill Gothard does, but I'm just making the point here.

Be very careful. There are things that have some good things in them maybe, but in these good things are some wrong doctrine. There are some things which if you swallow it, will have an effect in your life and in your children's life.

It'll take you places you don't want to go. I can guarantee it. I can guarantee it.

The Bible gives us no hope for changing the world through political means. Let me say that again. The Bible gives us in the New Testament no hope for changing this world with political means.

We are not called to clean up the fishbowl. We are to be what? Fishers of men. There is not a political agenda in the New Testament.

It is not there. It is not there. The Bible speaks to the Christian about government, but only to pray for the government, to obey the laws of the land, to pay your taxes, to render under Caesar what is Caesar's.

But it tells us to come out from among them and be separate. Well, the third principle that I want to go over this morning that relates to this whole thing of participation or non-participation in government is non-resistance. Non-resistance.

Now, some of you, when I say that, may ask, well, what does non-resistance have to do with whether I vote or not? Everything. Everything. Voting and a Christian's relationship with government has a lot to do.

Remember our definition here of a political party that's trying to take power? They're an organized group that wants to get elected so that they can set forth their own agenda. It says to take control is the wording of the government. Okay? So they take control of the government.

What does the government do? Do you know who the commander-in-chief of the army is? The president. He has the power to, they say, push the magic button or whatever they call it. I don't know.

Some people call it the red button. Is that it? Okay, the red button. And they say, I've never been to the White House, or at least in his Oval Office, send out atomic bombs.

How would you like to vote for that man that did that? You know, a lot of people are upset at Bush because of the Iraq war. People who did vote for him, and he sent their sons and daughters, and they've died by, I guess, the thousands now. I don't know what the count is over there.

And did he have the authority to do that? To send them to their deaths? That's right, because he's the commander-in-chief. Do you know what that means? He's in charge of the army. The generals answer to him.

He's the chief commander of the army. Can a Christian do these things, be involved in these things? Turn to Matthew 5. Matthew 5. Let's look at verse 38. Matthew 5. Verse 38.

"...Ye have heard that it hath been said..." This is Old Testament. "...an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." So Jesus here is dealing with this whole thing of what to do with the old dispensation and the new. "...But I say unto you..." He's saying we're going to change things.

We have a new dispensation. A new covenant. The word covenant means agreement or it's bigger than a contract.

I don't want to get into the definition of all that, but that's what He's saying here. "...that ye resist not evil. But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will sue thee at law and take away thy cloak, let him have thy cloak." See, nonresistance isn't about pacifism or being against war. That's only one little part of it. It's about the whole spirit of the New Testament in a Christian.

"...And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it is said, Thou shalt love thy

neighbor and hate thy enemy." That's what the Old Testament would say.

Now watch, Jesus is going to change it again here. Verse 44, "...But I say unto you, Love your enemies." How can you vote for the commander-in-chief and love your enemies when you know He's going to send people to kill people and to be killed? "...Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." And we could go on.

Who are you? Are you the children of your Father in heaven? Or do you want to go back to the old dispensation? An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Oh, there's so many verses. I don't know how many more to read here.

Let's try Romans 12. I wish I could talk faster. Maybe you can listen faster.

Is that possible? I don't know. Romans 12, verse 19. Again, this is the third principle in this thing about participating in government, non-resistance.

"...Dearly beloved..." Who is the beloved? It's my favorite name for me that God calls me. You are the beloved if you are in Christ. This is to the Christian.

"...Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger..." Vote for George W. Bush to send more troops? It doesn't say that, does it? "...Feed him.

If he thirsts, give him drink. For in so doing, thou shalt heat coals of fire in his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." And there's other verses I could go to.

Matthew 26, 52. I won't turn there. Also, we're told clearly in Ephesians 6, 12 and 2 Corinthians 10 that our war... We are in a war, brothers and sisters, but our war is not of flesh and blood.

It is what? It is not carnal. It is spiritual. We are in a war.

We're in the battle of the cosmos. We're in the battle of the ages. And it makes this paltry thing in Iraq or Vietnam or anything you want to put in there look like a drop in the ocean that you wouldn't even see if it were 50 miles away from you.

Because it's the battle for men's souls. You're in a battle. You are a soldier.

It's just you've been drafted into another army. You've been translated into another kingdom. And you do need to be hot.

You do need to be active. But if you're entangled in another man's war, how good a soldier are you going to be over here? That's the confusing thing, isn't it? So confusing. How can we enter into that other arena where there's the spirit of competition, resisting each other to gain control, and walk in the Spirit as a Christian? What about humility, meekness, self-denial, servanthood? Headlines here says, Bush and Kerry pound away before the debate.

John Kerry accused President Bush of favoring friends. Bush said Kerry misunderstood the terror on the war and he's a nuisance. I mean, they're pounding away.

They're in a war. What war are you in? It says here, in political calendar, it's mean season. They're mean.

They're mean to each other. Saying horrible things. They won't even read you all the things they're saying about each other.

And again, this principle of non-resistance applies here because they are not being non-resistant to one another, are they? Neither are their political parties. And again, non-resistance is not pacifism. It's not non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi and one of his best disciples, Martin Luther King, used the power and the force of non-violence to wage a war against the government of America and won, right? Mahatma Gandhi against his government in India at the turn of the century, and Martin Luther King in the early 1960s, he forced America to change by the power of sit-ins, parades, demonstrations. He resisted the government with his whole being and it cost him his life. I mean, it's a great story, but it's not a Christian story.

Because he did not practice non-resistance. Now, he was a pacifist in a way in that he didn't pick up a club and hit the policemen back. But he resisted those policemen with all of his strength.

When they said go home, he didn't go home. I mean, he was a pacifist, but he wasn't non-resistant. And so, we're not demanding our rights.

We're not having sit-ins and marches and rallies against the government to get those things that we want the government to vote our way. Look at 1 Peter 2 again. Here's another verse I want you to look at.

1 Peter 2. And verse 21. 1 Peter 2 verse 21, For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.

And watch verse 23. Who when He was reviled, reviled not again. That's not what the political party is doing now.

They're reviling each other. And the louder one shouts, the louder the other one goes back against Him. When He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.

We've got to remember that when the Christian church started with the apostles after Jesus left, what government were they under? Who was in control of the known world at that time? Roman rule. They had their Caesar, their emperor. They had the Roman army.

They were in control. Their rule was absolute. Most of the Christians were slaves or the poor.

They were the fishermen. Just the regular people of the day. But you know what amazing thing happened? An amazing thing happened.

They couldn't stop the Kingdom of God from spreading. Though they reviled not, though they resisted not, though it cost them, as far as we can tell, it seems like all of them their life, physically, what happened under that Roman rule? That totalitarian regime? The gospel just grew, grew, grew. So do we need to... You know, there was a lie when I even remember I wasn't a Christian as a boy, but I remember one of the propaganda of America Anybody here alive during the Cold War with Russia? Do you remember that? Anybody here over 40? It was.

It was even told to us in our schools. I remember this. You've got to grow up and get ready to fight the Russians and kill them because if they take over, you won't even be able to be a Christian and go to church.

We were told that in the public schools back in the 60s. You know, they were lying. Under the Roman rule, much harsher than communism, by the way, they used to use Christians for torches at their parties.

Much harsher than communism. Christianity exploded. You know? And they were non-resistant.

You don't read a New Testament about Peter and Paul figuring out how to assemble an army to take over, you know, even a small plot of land in Israel to have a base of operations. It's not in there, is it? Very interesting. And yet Americans today think we need to arm ourselves and get guns because somebody might not let us be a Christian.

It's not true. It's not true. And you won't find anything in the New Testament to substantiate that.

And yet, many are deceived. Many are deceived. You know, I quoted the figure earlier, over a billion dollars will be spent in this very aggressive, horrible battle of presidential election.

The sad thing is, I wonder how much of that money comes from sincere Christians. I wonder. They say 55% of America is a Christian.

I don't believe that. There might be 5%, maybe less. I don't know.

But even if it's 5%, what's 5% of a billion? 50 million? 500 million? No, 500 million wouldn't be. 50? Okay, 50 million. That's a lot of money, isn't it? 50 million.

Even if we say it's 50 million that Christians are given to that cause. I wonder how much is spent on missions. I don't know.

I don't know. Okay, so those are the three principles. Two kingdoms.

Doctrine of separation and non-resistance. Then I have a list here of just some practical thoughts. Some of them I've sort of already covered.

But to just kind of give some more guidelines and practical applications, let me go over these kind of quickly. The Bible says to love your neighbor as yourself. Yet, at election time, men become bitter, bitter rivals and say all manner of hateful things about each other.

Angry words are exchanged. People are called names. Where is the spirit of brotherly love in an election? You cannot justify it.

How can the Gospel be shared in the heat of a political argument? There's a lot of political tracts being given out. How do you hand somebody a tract that they need to get born again after arguing with them, saying, Bush, Kerry, Kerry, Bush? I don't think you're going to do it. Number two, evil speaking.

Again, it's here. Evil speaking. Harsh words are said about someone's character.

They're saying horrible things about each other's character. They have a name for it. The newspapers call it mudslinging.

It makes it sound a little bit nicer, I guess. But it's not nice. It's not nice.

Listen to what the Bible says about stuff like that. Psalm 101 says, Whoso privately slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off. That hath a high look and a proud heart will I not suffer.

Proverbs 10.18, He that hideth hatred and lying lips and he that uttereth a slander is a fool. Now, I'm not calling these men fools, but God says that they're fools because they're slandering one another. Titus 3.2, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing meekness unto all men.

It's not happening, is it? Do you want to be part of this process? Three, from the verse we just looked at in Psalms, it talked about a proud heart. The pride that is in politics is monumental. Monumental.

What a proud system we have for politics. Thinking that your way is best. Aggressive slogans to show that you've got all the answers.

It's boasting. It's pride. And God resisteth the proud.

Where is the humility? Number four, the truth of the matter is the men that are running don't tell the truth. They say whatever is convenient to say to get you to vote for them. That's been proven through history.

I don't need to prove that here this morning. But God has some very strong words about men who say things and make promises and don't keep them. I don't want to be part of that system.

Zechariah 8, verses 16 and 17 says that God loves the truth, but it also says He hates lying lips. Verse 5, unequally yoked. And what I mean by that is even not only us, but even within the political system, have you ever heard the phrase, you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours? You ever heard that? Once you're going to run for political office, you have to sort of curry the favor of special groups.

In order to get elected and be part of the political process, you've got to say the right thing to the NRA, the National Rifle Association. And then, well, the liquor industry, they give a lot of money. You know, both political presidents today, Bush and Kerry, are going after the homosexual vote because of the amount of money they control.

So they're both walking real careful and trying to draw them in and say all the right things. Special favors to the military, to the entertainment industry. Unequally yoked.

Sixth, the Bible in the New Testament teaches us that the last shall be first. Does anybody want to be last in a political election? But God just turns that whole thing... You know, when the Bible says that the apostles turned the world upside down, this is the kind of stuff they're talking about. The last shall be first.

Does it make sense? In the kingdom of this world, that is not true. You cannot come in last and be first in the kingdom of this world. But, if you have been translated into the kingdom of God, the Bible says the last shall be first.

Isn't that amazing? It doesn't work the same. And why, oh why, do we try to make it work the same? You actually need to be popular. You actually need to try to get people, everybody to like you a whole lot in order to win an election or be part of the government.

You know, candidates will even claim to be Christians and carry a Bible around sometimes. They're just trying to get a vote. They're just trying to get a vote.

We do not seek popularity. Our commission is to spread the Gospel. And the Gospel is not bound by politics or popularity.

The Gospel has never been popular and it never will be popular. The Bible says in Matthew 10.24, the disciple is not above his master and the servant is not above his Lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you.

We live in a Christ-rejecting world and the world governments reject Christ. Why? Do you want to join up in a system that is against your King? Faith. Number seven.

Faith is an issue. You know, is your faith in God or is it in the government of the land you live in? I tell you, if your faith is in the government of the land you live in, there should be no Christians in China. But you know, they say there's a flourishing church there.

Reports are coming out, documented reports, of millions of Christians. God may want us to have some leaders in this land that will bring more problems upon this land. I don't like that thought.

I don't desire that thought. But my faith is in my God. There's a verse in the Bible, Daniel 2.21, that says, He setteth the kings in the high places.

It's up to God. It's not up to you to join the moral majority and make a vote. Number eight.

We are pilgrims and strangers. We identify... You know, in the Bible, the Holy Spirit is symbolized by a dove. And Jesus is called the Lamb of God.

You know, the countries of this world, the symbol of America is a fierce eagle. Russia, a big bear. China, the big red dragon.

You know? And we're just a lamb and a dove. You know? Number nine. The methods of the world and the church are very different.

The governments enlarge their borders by taking over other nations. We enlarge our borders through prayer, evangelization, and bringing men to repentance. And then they're translated into the same kingdom we're in.

And that's our only real job anyway, isn't it? To talk other men out of this world into the kingdom of God. We have very different methods. They use the sword.

We use prayer and the preaching of the Word of God, which is foolishness. It's foolishness to the world. But it's the power of God to make them the sons of God to those that believe.

The call for the church today is to remember that we have a King. And that the exercise of prayer is a much more powerful tool than the expression of your opinion in a political arena. Prayer is the power that moves the hand of God who rules over all.

I don't want to trade it in for something else. I don't. It's two weeks now.

It'll be two weeks from Tuesday until this physical country and government we live in chooses a new leader. We already have an eternal leader, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords. And that isn't going to

change next Tuesday.

The leader of this land could change next Tuesday. The leader of that heavenly country is never going to change. It's fixed forever and ever.

It's sealed. It's done. How will you spend your time the next two weeks, I wonder? Will you read the papers a lot? Or will you pray much? If you're really concerned, pray much.

Go to your voting booth. Remember that tear-stained rug I talked about a little bit earlier? There are two voting booths. Yours is open today and tomorrow.

You don't have to wait until Election Tuesday. Yours is open now. Are you a woman of faith, a man of faith, a young person of faith? Remember the passage we read in Hebrews 11 about seeking and desiring a better country? It said if they had been mindful of that country from what they came from, they might not have left.

The problem is, what are you and I mindful of today? Don't let your mind go back and wonder, should I get... If they had been mindful, they would never have been called the people of God. Don't you be mindful. Don't be other-minded.

You are a stranger and a pilgrim. You are an alien. You are an alien.

When you were born again in the Kingdom of God, you became an alien to this world. And this whole principle of participation in government, again, is far, far bigger than voting. The whole thing has been brought up by people asking me, do I vote? But again, please see, the reality of this is far, far bigger.

And it will affect the way you look, the way you read your Bible, and the way you understand this will affect many decisions that you will make in your life and in your children's life. May God be blessed by these words today and I trust that you will take them to heart. And I encourage you to study this for yourself.

I didn't have time to go over everything that I would have liked to today. But I trust that you fathers will take seriously the charge that I gave you. Just hearing me say this for one hour will not make it connect into the hearts of your children the way it needs to.

I've heard too much talk the last few years among some people in our own churches about getting involved in these kind of things. And it's not going well. It's not going to come out right.

May we be the people of God. May we be who we are. A royal priesthood set apart for the things of God.

Praise God. Thank you for listening this morning. Amen.

Amen, dearly beloved. I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. And that's what I sense as this is going on right now.

I hear Christians talking about it. I heard a young man talk about he couldn't resist hearing certain debates that were going on. He had to have the radio on.

There's these debates. There is this war going on. And I believe this is one of these fleshly lusts that are warring against your soul.

And you do well to abstain from it. Does anyone have anything to add? Brother David down here. Yeah, that's really clear.

I had some foggy spots in my own heart about that subject. And that's a blessing just to walk that through and be reminded of the kingdom that I belong to. I appreciate that.

And it seems that God had a message for me this morning. I was struck this very morning as I was reading here this verse. It said, Peter said, Behold, we have forsaken all and followed Thee.

What shall we have therefore? Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit up in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So I am a part of a political race. But it's in the regeneration.

That word regeneration means there's coming a time when things are going to be made new again. It's a making new. But it's not talking about the regeneration that's going to gradually happen.

It's the regeneration when Jesus Christ comes. And He sits on His glorious throne and every eye will see Him, even those that pierce Him. And He shall rule with a rod of iron as the potter's vessel is broken to shivers.

I'm looking forward to that day. That's the regeneration. And then the last shall be first.

The meek shall inherit the earth. And the... I forget the other one that pertains to that. The other verse I was thinking of too that made a real change in my life and many of these things and actually led me to first start struggling.

One of the major principles that Rick raised Colossians, I believe it is, says, let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth. That's the commandment. Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth.

And there are so many things in the world, so many groups you can get involved with and activities, but you have to come to grips with the Word of God. Is that a commandment? Or is that not a commandment? And if it is a commandment, the world, it seems, they think nothing of letting unwholesome words proceed out of their mouth on a regular basis. But that's the Word of God.

And that will set us apart in many arenas. Not just this one, but in many areas. Amen.

Brother Steve? It's just only by the grace of God that I can testify this morning that I am a citizen of heaven and that the leader that I give my allegiance to is the captain of the host, Jesus Christ. And I can just say that I am so thankful to God that several years ago He opened my eyes fully to this. I can say in the past I was involved with the political process in the sense of trying to promote the area.

A politician by putting up his signs because he was a professing Christian. And we were really involved in that back in Indiana. But God's opened my eyes to the whole truth that I'm in a new kingdom and my allegiance is to my Jesus Christ.

But just a couple of verses I wanted to share that were a blessing to me that are relevant to this. 1 Timothy 1.18 Paul is giving Timothy a charge. And he says, This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.

We are, as Brother Rick has said, we are in a war and we need to be involved in that war. Another verse I appreciate is in 2 Timothy 2.3 It says, Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. So we are soldiers.

And I appreciated how Rick mentioned about pacifism. If you think about it, at least my idea of what a pacifist is is somebody that believes in peace at all costs. That there's no... never are we to be involved in any war.

And we need to be careful as Christians if we say that we are in a war and we realize we are soldiers of the King Jesus, we become pacifists if we are not praying, if we are not seeking the Lord, if we are not involved in evangelism and testifying. We're just pacifists because then we're not involved in the kingdom of this world, but we're not doing anything for God's kingdom either. So I don't want to be a pacifist.

And I would just pray and ask for your prayers that I'd be busy about God's work and that I'd be on the battleground serving my Lord by opening my mouth for Him because then only am I involved in the war. And I just also wanted to share about another verse, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. And I believe that at least where I was, and maybe there might be some sitting here, maybe even someone that will listen to this tape, that a belief system that we hold onto for a long time can be a stronghold.

And it can be very hard to give up. And we can hear from these people about the importance of being involved in the political process, but what we need to do is simply look at the Word of God and read what it says. So I would just really encourage anyone that's struggling in this, forget about these belief systems.

They need to be torn down. What does the Word of God say about politics and about how we're to be involved? And we're not. So I just wanted to... I know the Lord showed that to me and I just praise Him for that.

And I just would encourage, read the Word of God. It's very clear. Thank you, Brother Rick, for the sound teaching I received today.

I just want to testify that God is... He's merciful. Two thoughts I want to share. Many years ago, I used to be dedicated daily to listen to a three-hour talk show program that leaned pretty far right conservative politics.

And I just look back and I can't believe that I would spend that much time each day listening to that on the radio and just filling my mind with that. And over time, I just got so involved in it and consumed that the Lord just smoked my heart. What am I doing? What am I doing wasting my time filling my mind with that kind of stuff when His kingdom is far from that? So much better and such a higher calling and has eternal purposes.

These nations, they're going to perish. They are going to perish. And we have a kingdom that we're serving that has an eternal value.

The second thing I'd like to share, I was a typical American boy who was taught to be patriotic to my country, so at a very young age, I joined the United States Air Force and was involved in the first Persian Gulf War. And after the war and after I got out of the military and as I came to see the teachings of Christ and what He taught about loving your enemies and blessing those who persecute you, I just realized I had blood on my hands from being involved in killing thousands of Iraqis. And even though I didn't directly pull

the trigger, I worked on the aircraft that dropped the bombs and shot the missiles.

And the Lord just smoked my heart. And I had to repent of that, that God doesn't want His children being involved in any such thing. Brother Victor, I know when we moved here, there were still some things that I was still set on and one was voting.

And when you apply for a license, you also have the option of signing up to vote. And we registered at the time and I think it was just pride. It's my right to go ahead and vote.

It's the least I can do. That's my attitude. But I thank the Lord for His word.

And I think of Romans 12 about having our minds renewed. And it is through His word that renews us. And we have to face God's word.

And as we're seeking the Lord, He helps us to see these things. I saw it as we were coming up in this year of politics and presidential campaign and all that. I think what finally did it for me was Philippians 4.8. And again, we're familiar with this.

It says, Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, of virtue and praise, think about these things. And as I just look at the whole thing, it doesn't pass any of those. And that just kind of helped me to see about that card that was given to me when I got my driver's license of putting the wastebasket.

And I thank the Lord for that to help me to see that it's more than just not voting. As we heard today, it's a way of life. We're serving a king.

It's King Jesus. And we're seeking His righteousness. And I just thank the Lord for His word that He opens up our eyes to see these truths.

And in Isaiah, I think it's chapter 40, it says, The nations are as a drop in a bucket. They are altogether less than dust. And that's God's perspective.

He loves the world. He gave His Son for it that we would be saved. And He left that door ajar.

I appreciate that song we sang today, that it was left ajar for me. And I praise the Lord for that. But I thank the Lord that by His Spirit, He moves in our hearts and helps us to see these things and turn away from them and to seek Him and serve Him only.

So I praise the Lord for this timely message for us to consider. As a citizen of the United States, to become eligible to vote, you must register. And once you register, you become eligible to sit on juries.

And the ungodly courts that we have today, I wouldn't want to be any part of it. Back in 1962, I was eligible for the military and I signed up for four years in the Navy. But as God saved me in the Navy, I would never do military service again.

I thought of those ones that ran during Vietnam to Canada. They had reason to run. Seeing their brothers come back in body bags.

I listened to one fellow that came back and he said, I want to go back to Vietnam. I said, why do you want to go back? He said, I'm making so much money on the black market. Since President Kennedy got

assassinated, I remember what that did to me when I first heard the news.

But I've listened to some of the history that's come out of different presidents that we've had. And I know there's a lot of people that are ashamed of voting for different men that they said, I never thought that man had that kind of morals or debauchery while he was in office. So I appreciate, Brother Rick, that message this morning.

I was 100% behind it. We need to look at the Word and see how the Word looks to us and take heed to all that we've heard this morning. And Romans 12 says, Be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed with a renewing of your mind and have that Spirit of Christ and be a vessel unto honor and fight the good fight of faith, not in the warfare that these men are in.

Thank the Lord. I'm glad that he ever saved me out of this mess. Well, I grew up in the military.

All my brothers were kind of military and cousins and stuff as a young girl. But as growing up, I've never ever put my name on any, trying to register to vote or anything because I cannot see a way of myself registering myself to give this country my child to go out and service another country and get killed out there and I give it the okay to say, You can take my child. How can I put myself in that position when I myself don't have a right to take my son's life? It's Lord up there who has the right.

And he gave me that gift to have a child. Why would I even in this world even think of signing papers like that? I've never ever registered to vote. These are our children and we have to protect these children.

And everyone that goes out there to vote is saying it's okay for you to take my child out there into a war and maybe I will never see him again. And until today I'm 35 and I would never ever register to vote. I just want to say amen to the first message.

I do want to testify that I love the Lord and I thank him for saving such a wretched eye two years ago. And I just want to bless him. Thank you.

Brother Rick spoke briefly about the compromise that there is in politics. My mind went back to 313 A.D. when really the ultimate, the emperor of the Roman Empire professed to be a Christian. This is exactly what anyone who makes an argument that we should be involved in government, that's what they want.

Is that the emperor would be a Christian. And we all know the story that Constantine brought so much compromise together into the church that it has wrought probably the biggest deception that man has ever seen. We still see the effects of that today almost 2,000 years later.

We see the effects of the success of what they wanted to do to bring together the church and state. I had to think that even if we had the most ideal, perfect candidate, the Bible promises that evil communications corrupt good manners. Don't be deceived in that.

That even with the perfect candidate, we don't have any business being in government. That perfect person wouldn't have any business being there. By the evil communications, we almost have a promise they would become corrupted.

I also thought of the verse, it's the next verse from what was quoted here already. And it says, No man that warreth and tangleth himself in the affairs of this world, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And isn't that our heart and our purpose to please the Lord Jesus to not be entangled in

the affairs of this world? And that's their affair.

I also want to share a little bit of my testimony Before I was born again, I was on the school board, an elected position on the school board of the local school district and on the board of directors of a milk co-op. And all of those things with the idea that well, I want to make a difference. I want to do something good for people and stand for what I know is right and represent the sensible and so on.

And you know, when I entered into the new kingdom, I had no more interest in those things. Zero. No interest whatsoever in being on the school board.

No interest whatsoever in making my point of view in this world known. And so I can testify to that the Lord Jesus Christ took that and now I serve Him and praise God for that. Amen.

I just want to testify this morning's message of God's grace upon my life and all the many things that He has done for me. I was raised in a godly home and taught good things, but I was very rebellious. When I was about 13, I turned my life around and God had mercy on me.

I lived a victorious Christian life for about a year. I got involved in some things that I knew weren't right. And over time, I on purpose walked away from God and lived a hypocrite's life for many years.

I thank God that He again gave me another chance and drew me back to Himself. Now I have victory again and I'm able to walk with the Lord and have fellowship with Him. And if any of those that might be in a hypocrite position today, there's a chance for you.

Don't let the devil tell you that you walked away and you don't have a chance. God still loves you. Brother Lawrence? Yeah, my heart is just full of joy to be here in a place where we can hear sound doctrine.

The Bible tells us that in the last days will be a time when men shall not endure sound doctrine. I believe we're in that time today. You know, if you hear the conversations among even our own people, I mean outside of my background people, you hear a lot of compromise in this very area.

And I'm just thankful that Rick preached a message on this subject here. We do want to believe in sound doctrine. Marty? There's a lie that the world kind of tells us to compromise and take the lesser of two evils.

The truth is if we're a Christian, we've made a vote. We've made that choice already. Much of what the argument settles around is well, if you're a good person and you believe God, well, you need to vote so you can help this world.

I think it's been shared many times over. I guess our best place is on our knees, not in the voting booth of the world. And I just appreciated the message and the clarity just to bring forth God's Word as the authority because He is the way, the truth, and the life.

And you know, He also ordains the powers that be for a purpose. We see it in the Old Testament. These Syrians for a purpose were put in control.

The Medes and the Persians. And different things as we go through the books of Esther and just see what happened with Israel. God ordains what's happening.

And America needs a wake up. You know, if we want to say America as a group or a nation, we've lived on our comforts and our laurels too long. Now we need to be shaken up a little bit.

We need to really look at the Christ we believe in. Is He the all-authority? When I think about the message today, how many other churches need to hear what we heard and what we heard last week. We all need to burn with a fire for the Lord, not for the health of this world, but do what He instructs us.

Like fishers of men, let's not clean the fishbowl. As Rick was preaching, I noticed the difference in the two kingdoms. The kingdom of this world takes the lawbreaker and the sinner and locks him up.

But the kingdom of Jesus Christ takes the lawbreaker and the sinner and sets him free. Praise God for the message. Hallelujah.

Well, I have one last word for you. Rick admonished us as fathers to lift this up in our homes to basically what he was telling us in this matter. Be a Berean.

Study the Scriptures and teach it to our children. And I would like to echo that for every message you hear over this pulpit. If the Word of God is going to stay alive in the next generation and the next generation, it's going to be because individual fathers take the Word of God that's preached and they become Bereans with it and they put it into the hearts of their children.

If you just depend on the preacher to do it here on Sunday morning and you praise God that you're going to come and hear a good message and your children get to sit under that and that's the way you raise your children, you won't pass on the faith to the next generation. That's why I believe God so lifts up the Bereans and admonishes us to be like the Bereans and study the Scriptures and pass on the torch. So, thank you all for sharing.

Thank you, Brother Rick, for laboring in the Word.

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