

Citizens & Saints Part 4
Stewards of a Rich Heritage
Psalm 33

This song gives us perspective on how God views a nation

¹²Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the Lord,
The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

¹³The Lord looks from heaven;

He sees all the sons of men.

¹⁴From the place of His dwelling He looks

On all the inhabitants of the earth;

¹⁵He fashions their hearts individually; (so the Lord looks at a nation, not just corporately, but individually)

He considers all their works.

¹⁶No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army;

A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

¹⁷A horse *is* a vain hope for safety;

Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength.

And here's what the Lord is really looking for

¹⁸Behold, the eye of the Lord *is* on those who fear Him,

On those who hope in His mercy, (the Lord is looking for those who fear him who have a reverence for who he is, and who have placed their hope in the reality that he is a merciful God)

¹⁹To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

RESPONSE

²⁰Our soul waits for the Lord;

He *is* our help and our shield.

²¹For our heart shall rejoice in Him,

Because we have trusted in His holy name.

²²Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us,

Just as we hope in You.

Back in November of 2001 a series came out called

24- Keifer Sutherland in the role of Jack Bauer

A)Jack was a special agent in the US counter terrorism unit

B)24 stood for the hrs in a day - 24 episodes in a season -

C)Jack Bauer would do more in that one day - to save the world

1)Than most people would do in a life time.

D)Now Denise and I didn't start watching the show when it first came out -

1)but around season 3 someone gave us a DVD set of the first 2 episodes for Christmas

So we started watching Season 1 and immediately got hooked

A)Now my wife doesn't do good with suspenseful things

B)Stressed out. We have to see if Jack makes it -

C)I would remind her -Babe there are 3 seasons - and Jack is in everyone – he is going to make it.

1)The question was how - how was Jack Bauer going to save the world this time?

D)That was the entertaining part - THE HOW - no stress - he makes it

1)9 seasons - he never died

In a similar way as the- Church we know how this story ends - Jesus is coming back -

A)Jesus is coming to the rescue -Jesus WINS

B)Jesus is going to set up his Kingdom - Jesus is going to set things right

1)Jesus is going to put an end to injustice –

C)We are waiting to see HOW HE is going to do it

Now the difference between our lives and watching a TV show is this:

A)we get to be a part of the story Jesus has invited us to be key players in his kingdom

B)In our citizens /Saints series, we have talked about how we are Saints who are a part of His Kingdom,

1)and who are waiting for his Kingdom

C)But are also citizens in this Kingdom the Kingdom of this world

1)so that's what we've been talking about over these last three weeks

In the first two studies, we looked at what we are called to be as the church in the world as Image Bearers

A)Salt and Light in the world

B)Then last week we looked at what it was what it's like to live in a Babylonian culture.

1) Daniel was our example.

C) Daniel and his friends didn't just survive Babylon they thrived in Babylon

1) they made an impact they had influence they were men who were respected

But one of the things that was different about

Babylon and the first century Roman Empire, A) that Jesus and the disciples were living in his, those countries and cultures were monarchy.

B) We don't live in a monarchy.

C) We don't live under a king who is a dictator or an emperor who is the supreme ruler

WE live in a democracy

A) Because we live in a democracy that means that we have rights that they didn't have.

B) Rights that have been established in the Declaration of Independence, US Constitution

1) The Bill of Rights as well our State Constitutions

C) So in this final study today I want to keep in mind what we learned the first three studies

1) what it means to be image bearers and Salt and light

D) and I want to talk about what that looks like in a democracy because it is a little bit different

E) But I want to begin by discussing the difference between Christian nationalism and Christian stewardship

Christian nationalism has its roots in Dominion theology,

A) also known as the New Apostolic Reformation

B) and it's a theology that basically teaches that we the church need to Christianize the world

1) take dominion of it and get it ready for Jesus

C) Now my friends That's not what the Bible teaches.

And I think one of the best ways to determine whether or not a teaching is true and it's really from the Lord is to ask the question.

A) Did Jesus teach this and practice this? Did the apostles teach this and practice this?

B) If the answer is no we reject it because they are models

C) Dominion theology is not what Jesus or the early church taught - believed or practiced.

D) what we read in the NT is that theology that teaches that our world is broken because of the fall 1) and it's only going to be made right again when Jesus comes back and set up his kingdom

But the gospel of Jesus Christ can change our world by changing one person at a time

A) And that is exactly what we saw in our study of the book of Acts.

B) The World was turned upside down, not because of a Change in GOVT –

1) Lives were being transformed by Jesus and that impacted the Culture on every level.

Now Christian nationalism or dominion theology takes a different approach

A) See they believe that Jesus can't come back until we Christians clean up this world

B) we have to get ready for him to return.

C) My friends the Bible doesn't teach that

Jesus doesn't need our help to fix this world in this planet.

A) The Bible literally teaches that in the last days things are not going to be getting better – they're going to be getting worse

B) they're going to be getting darker

C) the Bible says last days people will be departing from the faith people will be pursuing ungodliness 1) violence will be growing all over the planet people will be putting pushing God out of culture.

D) Like the days of Noah before the Flood – so bad – destroyed and like the day of Sodom and Gomorrah.

1) Mankind at his worst - Immorality out of control

E) And then Jesus shows up and he puts it back together

1) and makes all things new he makes things right he brings it all back together.

Now dominion theologians take their premise from Genesis chapter 1 verse 28.

A) God told Adam and Eve to have dominion over the earth. – PRE FALL

B) the garden of Eden wasn't a broken world it was a perfect place

1) there was nothing that needed to change

C) there was nothing that needed to be fixed so God wasn't asking them to have dominion over it in that way

D) So what did God mean when he said – take dominion?

1) I think the true biblical interpretation of that would be God was asking them to be stewards of the garden

D) and that's what he asked us to do today to be stewards of what he has put into our hands

1) to be stewards of what he has given us.

E) Think about who and what has been placed into your hands to steward?

1) Think about that and we'll come back to that question at the end of our study.

Now as Christians living here in America God has given us a country that has a rich heritage in biblical truths.

A) And so I want to spend a little bit of time this morning looking at our rich heritage

B) looking at how our country was put together

1) looking at what our founding fathers believed and some of the things that they wrote that we have been called to be stewards of.

C) See one of the real problems in our country today is that we did not steward well

1) what God has given to us.

D) I want to look briefly at the influence of Christianity upon 3 particular areas of our history,

- The Founding documents
- Education
- Government

The founding documents

A) Of the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence, more than half 29 had either seminary or Bible school degrees.

B) So Many of the founding fathers of the USA were men who held deep religious convictions

1) that were based on the Bible and in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ,

2) and that shaped their view of life, and thus ultimately, that shaped our nation.

C) To show how much Christianity influenced our Founding Fathers

1) and ultimately influenced our nation, here are a few quotes.

We'll start with John Adams, the second President of the United States. He said, the general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity. I will avow that I then believe, and now believe that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God.

Or consider what Thomas Jefferson said, our third president, and he was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence. He said, quote, God who gave us life, gave us liberty. And can the liberties of the nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis and conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God, that they are not to be violated but with his wrath., indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever.”

Consider the words of John Hancock, and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

He said, quote, resistance to tyranny becomes the Christian and social duty of each individual.

Continue steadfast and with a proper sense of your dependence on God, nobly defend those rights which had been given and no man ought to take from us.

Doctor Benjamin Rush, who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a ratifier of the US Constitution.

He said, “I do not believe that the Constitution was the offspring of inspiration, but I am satisfied that it is as much the work of divine providence as any of the miracles recorded in the Old and New Testaments.

So the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, acknowledged that this nation was founded up upon the principles of God

A)and they were willing to risk their lives for our independence based on their Christian faith,

B)they were willing to sign their names on the Declaration of Independence under the signature line that read “And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”

C)Did you know that God or the divine is mentioned at least once

1)in each of the 50 state constitutions and nearly 200 times overall,

D)I'm going to read a few of them to you. They're still in the state constitutions today. For example, in the state of Delaware,

Thomas McKean and George Reed placed in Delaware State Constitution this clause. Quote, “Everyone elected or appointed to Office shall make and subscribe the following devotion to wit. Quote, I do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, his only son, and in the Holy Ghost, one God blessed forevermore. And I do acknowledge the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration”

Think about this, in order to hold office in the state of Delaware, you need to subscribe to this.

A)every politician from the state of Delaware, is supposed to Profess faith and to live by that.

B)That is in their state constitution.

C)Consider the Pennsylvania State Constitution, authored by Benjamin Rush and James Wilson. Quote, each member of the legislature, before he takes his seat, shall make and subscribe the following declaration. Quote, I do believe in one God, the Creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good and punisher of the wicked. And I do acknowledge the scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration”. End quote, that's in the Pennsylvania State Constitution.

D)Listen to Massachusetts state constitution, also by Samuel Adams.

Quote, all persons elected must make and subscribe the following declaration, I do declare that I believe the Christian religion and have firm persuasion of its truth.”

E)So it is clear to see that Christianity and the Bible played an important role in the founding of this country.

Education

A)When kids were being taught their ABCs, in school – the Bible was a big part of the curriculum

B)each letter of the alphabet had a Bible verse attached to it for example:

A- A wise man make it the glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother, Proverbs, 10:1

B- “Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, Than great treasure with trouble.” Proverbs 15:16 NKJV

C- Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew, 11:28

C)Did you know that 106 out of the first 108 colleges that were established in the USA 1)were founded by Christians based on Christian values,

D)With the purpose of instilling, those Christian values in our school systems.

All the Ivy League schools, like Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Brown Dartmouth, Columbia, Cornell and the University of Pennsylvania were founded for the express purpose of training missionaries and ministers for the gospel of Christ.

So Christianity and the Bible had a major role in the School systems.

Government

Noah Webster said, “Our citizens should really understand that the genuine source of correct Republican principles is the Bible, particularly the New Testament, or the Christian religion.”

Roger Sherman - Signer of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution

"I believe that there is one only living and true God, existing in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the same in substance equal in power and glory. That the scriptures of the old and new testaments are a revelation from God, and a complete rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him. –

Government

- **The three branches of government that our founders came up with was derived from the Bible.**
- **They took it right out of Isaiah 33:22** “For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our all giver. The Lord is our king. He will save us.”

They saw the Lord as our judge. That's the judicial branch.

- The Lord is our law giver. That state legislative branch,
- The Lord is our king. That's the executive branch.

Proverbs 14:34 “Righteousness exalts a nation

A)One of the reasons why America in such a short time has flourished as a nation -

B)Became a super power in the world
1)America is only 247 yrs old -

C)Compare that to some of the other super powers in the world.
1) China 3,500 years old
2) Russia 1,160 years old
3) Germany and England both over 1,000 years

D)How did America rise to prominence so fast?
It is because of this principle that our country was founded on - **IT IS ON OUR CURRENCY STILL - IN GOD WE TRUST!**

A)That is at the Core of our Foundation

B)So here's the million dollar question what happened?

C)How did we go from that to where we are today? Let me give you three observations.

#1 As our country grew and its prominence and power, we became more confident in ourselves and less dependent in God.

D)We succumbed to the sin of self-exaltation.

1)It's the same sin that we saw last week was the instigator that birthed Babylon.

E)we put trust in our money, our resources, our military might, our ingenuity.

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” Proverbs 14:34

#2 That opened the door to secular humanism- 1800's Colonel Robert Ingersoll

A)The first main point that Colonel Ingersoll proposed as part of secular humanism was that Christians should have no place in the political arena.

B)Instead Christians should be relegated to spiritual things like missions work and church work,
1))but they should stay out of politics. Colonel Robert Ingersoll

C)The other thing that Ingersoll taught was, that moral authority comes from human philosophy, not from God.

D)Human philosophy, secular ethics, that's what will guide us, not religion, not God.

E)Now Do you realize that when you hold to that view, that church and state shouldn't mix
1)and Christians just stay out of politics.

2)You are actually espousing secular humanism.

As Secular Humanism grew in Popularity - God gets pushed out of our society

A)Consider what was changed in a little over 50 yrs

B)A study by Pew Research found that the number of Americans who identified as Christian in 1972 92%

C)In 2020 that number dropped to 64% with 30% of the US population being classed as “religiously unaffiliated”.

D)by 2070 that number will drop to below 50% – and the number of “religiously unaffiliated” Americans –

1)or 'nones' will probably outnumber those adhering to Christianity.

#3 That open the door to judicial activism.

A)Suddenly, we are questioning and challenging all the principles that our country was founded upon as one nation under God

B)we are taking prayer out of our schools, taking the 10 Commandments out of our court rooms

C)And even questioning when life begins leading to the accepting of abortion and millions upon 60 million plus babies being aborted

D)Marriage was always defined as being between one man and one woman

1)Changes in 2015 – Not just a man and a woman

Part of the problem was we the church didn't steward our heritage –

A)We sat by and let things change

So where do we go from Here?

A)Is it possible to take back ground that has been lost?

B)Vote – Support – Stand

REVIVAL

Revival starts with each one of us personally

We cannot control what happens in our nation and our nation's relationship with God

A)But we can control what happens in our own relationship with Jesus

B)Talk about Personal Stewardship

C)Have you been stewarding well your relationship with Jesus

1)or have you just been going through the motions

D)or maybe you've been living and compromise in an area of your life

E)Listen God can't bless compromise

1)God takes no pleasure in Complacency –

These people honor me with their lips – hearts are far from me.

Husbands – Steward Family?

Wives - Respect Support?

Parents – Kids? Grandparents – Grand kids?

Finances?

Close: 2 Chronicles 7:14 ¹⁴ if My people (his people before we the people sometimes we get so focused on we the people that we forget about being his people)

¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name (that is who Saints are - people called by his name)

¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, (the Bible says humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he will lift you up)

The Bible says God resists the proud but he gives grace to the humble

¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, (Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness)

¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, (That is repentance - it's turning from the way that we were walking, away from God's heart, away from God's plan, away from God's word, and we start walking in the right direction - we start following his word and this is his response) then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land

What God promises to a nation is equally true in our individual lives.

Does your marriage need healing?

Are you as a husband or a wife ready to humble yourselves to turn from the attitudes of the pride, the bitterness?

Does your heart need healing today? Are you ready to turn to the Lord?