

After The Election

When campaigning is finished ... the ballots are in ... the winners have rejoiced ... the losers have conceded ... the future lies ahead as it always has, and we as Christians have an important work to do. Regardless of party affiliation or the lack thereof there is a God-given task to which we must address ourselves immediately.

"Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

It is our duty, privilege, and opportunity to pray for those in office that they will rule in such a way that we may have a peaceful and godly life. Regardless of who is in power, Christians come to God through Jesus to pray for governments to make decisions that make for peace.

But did you notice that the passage is talking about a particular kind of peace? It is not just a peace so that economies can grow and nations can flourish and business can boom. It is one in which people will come to the knowledge of His truth, and find the salvation that is in Jesus -- the real goal of and reason for life.

Everything other than that which has to do with the spiritual -- including who is in office now -- are only the details of life, the backdrop for the really important matters. And so we are called to pray, honoring all men and God.

- by Robert Hines

Don't Give Up

Recently I talked with a fellow Christian about "those good ole days!" But suddenly the smile on my friend's face vanished and was replaced by a deep frown. "But, you know, it's not like it was then", he said. "We would invite our friends to study the Bible with us, and they would. They would obey the gospel and become workers in the church. Now, people think you are some kind of self-righteous, prejudiced nut if you try to show them the truth," he continued.

He was right. These are hard times for the Lord's church. God's truth has suffered at the hands of a nation that has come to believe everything is relative.

But hard times are nothing new to the Lord's church. It was conceived in a world that was full of religions which men had created. But when people realized the philosophies of men did not meet their real needs (in fact, they only created more problems) they turned to the Lord's church which had reserved the truth for them.

People have rejected the truth for the life-style Hollywood has expounded for years. The family has been all but destroyed. Sexual perversion has become the normal. Violence and hatred run rampant. Drug addiction is increasing rapidly. There is mass-murder in the workplace, the school room, on the streets, and in the home. Someday people will awaken and begin to search for a better way. The Lord's church must be there to show them the truth when they do awaken.

So, buckle up! Hang on! Take the beating the world is giving the Lord's church right now. If we give up and go along with the crowd, who will be there when the crowd realizes their need for the truth again? We have not shed our blood (yet), but we have the truth because others were willing to die for it. We must not let them down! We must not let the lost down! We must not let the Lord down!

- by B. E. Smith

Can We All See The Bible Alike?

If a statement is made often enough people will come to believe it even though it is not true. A good example is that which you hear so often in religion, "We can't all see the Bible alike." The Apostle Paul disagrees with this idea in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no

divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

If we can't all see alike why would Paul, the inspired Apostle, tell us to do so?

- by **Hirum Hutto**

"Selah"

Often, when reading in the Psalms, we come across the word, "selah." In fact, the word appears 71 times in the Psalms. (It is also found 3 times in Habakkuk.) What does this word mean? Why is it there? Is it important?

Most scholars agree that this term had a meaning in the musical nomenclature of the Hebrews. What that meaning was, though, has been lost and now it is a matter of pure conjecture. Some think the word was used to indicate an interlude -- a pause in the voices as they recited or sang the particular Psalm.

- **Greg Gwin**

A Problem Area for Preachers

Paul told Timothy to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). It has been suggested that this phrase literally means to preach when folks like it and when they don't. In another place the apostles prayed for "boldness" in their preaching (Acts 4:29). So, preachers are to boldly proclaim a message that will sometimes be unpopular.

In the process of doing this work, a preacher is in a precarious situation. This boldness may cause his hearers to think that he is over-confident. Some may imagine that he is close-minded. There may be the impression that he is not open to other points-of-view, or that he wants to stifle what others have to say. Sadly, in some cases and with some preachers, these accusations may be true.

However, no preacher 'worth his salt' wants to discourage open discussion of issues. And, while he may speak forcefully on a given topic, he acknowledges his own limitations and the possibility that he can err in understanding the Scriptures. If he is obedient to the Word, he knows that he (like all others) must continue to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18).

In this age of 'political correctness' it has become increasing unpopular to tell people that they are wrong about anything. But, of course, that is a significant part of what preachers do. Those who are doing their best to "reprove, rebuke and exhort" (2 Tim. 4:2) will inevitably touch on some areas that are 'close to home.' When this happens, we urge you to seriously consider what has been said. Honestly examine yourself to see if you need to apply the lesson. Be willing to re-think your previous position. And, finally, do not hesitate to share your thoughts and concerns with the preacher. If he is the kind of man he ought to be, he will gladly discuss any issue with you. Give him the chance to do so!

- by **Greg Gwin**