

Grace Evangel Fellowship Pulpit

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENTS

A Message

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And authority was given to it [the beast] over every tribe and people and language and nation. ... And it [the beast] is causing all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, that they may be giving them an emblem on their right hand, or on their forehead, and that no one may be able to buy or sell except the one having the emblem of the wild beast... (Revelation 13:7,16-17)

I have always been interested in politics. Early in my life I ran for and was elected to public office at the local level. I followed election results with great interest. And as I've grown older, I've remained interested in politics and world affairs.

But like so many other things in life that attract our attention and consume much of our precious time – I know that at times I place too much stock in following and commenting on politics. It is one of my weaknesses.

But I think about the apostle Paul. Despite his single-minded focus on spiritual things, he also recognized that he lived in a body of flesh in the present world, and within a political framework. At one point in his life, as he was about to be flogged without first being found guilty, he appealed to his Roman citizenship to exercise his rights. (Acts 22:25-29) Paul knew that he was not *of* this world, but he also knew he most certainly lived *in* this world.

As I've followed the events of the past two years, and as we all endured the Covid pandemic and our government's response to it, I have spoken out against the coerced forfeiture of our freedom. I have voiced my support for the political party that I believe best protects our freedom. The party that protects our free, republic form of government, not yielding to "globalism" where our sovereignty as a nation is forfeit. The party that protects our freedom of speech, that helps the poor to stand on their feet without being permanently dependent on government funding, and that addresses problems like racism without taking actions that in reality create even greater racism. The party that respects *all* life – including that of preborn children.

As it pertains to freedom and its importance – in a free society, and especially relating to our freedom of speech, we have the ability to speak the truth concerning God as He calls us to do. Once censorship and control take hold, our ability to serve as Christ's Ambassadors is severely hampered.

Furthermore, I pray for a peaceful world for my children, and their children, and their children after them, and so on. And so, I speak out at times about the political stances that I believe can best serve this role.

As we endured Covid, many voices throughout the world were insisting that we “trust the experts” and “trust science.” My sense that this had little to do with science was validated by two books that I recently read, and that I would highly recommend:

Deception; The Great Covid Cover-Up (Rand Paul 2023)

The Real Anthony Fauci, Bill Gates, Big Pharma, & the Global War Against Democracy & Public Health (Robert F. Kennedy Jr. 2021)

You can read my notes from these books on my web site at EvelyLLC.com

Things to come

From the Biblical perspective, by focusing on things to come we can help people living in this present life to be on guard when they are being subtly led down a wrong path. Let me direct you to a passage from the Bible that speaks of a future world condition.

In Revelation 13 there is described a “wild beast” (representative of some person or, perhaps, group of persons) which has authority to do “what it wills” for a period of 42 months. Authority is given to this beast “over every tribe and people and language and nation. And all who are dwelling on the earth will be worshiping it ...”

Another wild beast then arises, “deceiving those dwelling on the earth.” Everyone is required to worship the image of the wild beast, under penalty of death. No one is able to buy or sell without having the emblem of the wild beast on his hand or forehead.

So, what we’re seeing is a future global dictator – one who rules the entire world and insists that everyone accepts and even worships him if they want to survive. [Read Revelation 13, and all of Revelation for that matter, to understand what lies ahead for the governments of this world.]

The advent of the Internet, smart phones, social media, a push toward a cashless, digital currency (that can be easily be tracked), and big, big money that influences science and censorship – have all contributed to making our world much more vulnerable to heading into the Revelation passage I’ve just cited.

But we also need to think about something else ...

Peter once took a bold step in defending His Lord, as the authorities were in the process of arresting and apprehending Jesus. Peter struck off the ear of the high priest’s servant, but instead of receiving accolades for coming to the Lord’s defense, he received rebuke. (John 18:10-11)

Peter’s actions seem noble at first glance – defending His Lord! But God’s plan was that Jesus be crucified – so that He could be resurrected as a demonstration of God’s power over death – and to secure reconciliation with God and the future life after death for humanity, and for all of His creation.

So, Peter’s short-term action of defending His Lord was actually working counter to God’s plans.

Now as I consider where the world seems to be heading quite rapidly, especially in light of the prophetic passage from Revelation that I just referenced – if I speak out

about politics and government affairs to oppose the direction we are heading, could I be working AGAINST God's plan?

According to my reading of the Scriptures, at some point the governments of the world will fail, and the world will most certainly live under the evil conditions described in Revelation. This is inevitable. It is what God has revealed to us. Yet who wants to think of their children and grandchildren living in a crumbling world without raising a hand to prevent it? Or even one's neighbors, friends, work associates, or any person one knows, for that matter?

This is the heart of our dilemma!

And so, I contemplate the balance to be struck ... how much to say about politics and government affairs without crossing the line! And I think about the life of the apostle Paul – the apostle to the nations and therefore our guide in the present day.

When Paul went to Athens, he reasoned with those in the synagogue, but also in the marketplace. A group of philosophers disputed with him and invited him to a meeting of "the Areopagus" to present his arguments. While Paul knew his audience did not recognize the risen Lord Whom he was proclaiming, he nonetheless began his speech: "Men of Athens, I see that in every way you are religious. I saw your altar inscribed 'to an unknown god.' I am going to proclaim him to you." (Acts 17:16-32)

Here is just one example of how the apostle Paul lived in his present world context and found opportunities to bring the focus to God and the spiritual realm. This, then, seems like the appropriate balance to be struck!

Acknowledging God

The biggest problem in our society today is a failure to acknowledge God, and to attack every problem we face from a purely humanistic perspective. It's a mistake to leave God out of the equation. He is the Creator of all things! If we seek to understand His design, purpose, and plans ... we can live in harmony with His created order.

But if we ignore God's design and go our own way, we will find frustration after frustration. Looking at the world around us in this present day, this is what we're seeing!

Society's great problem is an ignorance of God – a failure to acknowledge God as we live this present life – and a neglect of God's means for revealing Himself to us. His revelation comes to us thru nature (His creation), but also thru His speaking to mankind thru the ages, as recorded in the Bible.

How do we know the Bible is God's revelation to us? I've approached this question in my 2021 book, "Does God Exist, and Has He Spoken to Us?" Within the book's pages I've tried to summarize the overwhelming evidence in support of God's existence – and in support of the contention that the Bible is His Word; His revelation to us.

Church

All of what I've said does not mean you should feel guilty if you don't attend a church. There are many different churches teaching many different things from the same

Bible. This brings confusion to the world, and an individual hardly knows what to believe.

“Church” as spoken of in the Bible comes from the Greek *ekklesia*, or *called-out-ones*. But those being “called-out” are not always the same. The church in Acts, for example, is comprised of believing Jews. Jesus Himself, in His earthly ministry, went exclusively to the “sheep of Israel” – not those of the nations. But the church that the apostle Paul later speaks of, as he shares God’s later revelation, is the body of Christ, comprised of those from all nations without distinction. It’s an entirely different church, or group of “called-out-ones,” from that of the previous era as described in Acts!

So, when we use the word “church,” we need to be sure we are accurate from the Biblical perspective. The church today, the body of Christ, is not *required* to congregate in a building as Israel once was. We who are the body of Christ ARE the church, wherever we are, and whenever!

What we’re really talking about here is the difference between religion – and faith. It’s about living the Christian life 24x7. It’s about serving as Christ’s ambassador wherever we are. It’s about how we raise our families and live in harmony with them. It’s about being loving and supportive of our family – and being good role models as parents. It’s about how we treat each family member and each friend. It’s about how we treat the people we work with or the waiters and waitresses at the restaurant. It’s about how we treat strangers. It’s about how we treat all people in all settings, letting them observe what it means to be people of faith. And it’s about standing up for truth as God has revealed it to us in His revelation – the Bible!

All that we do 24x7 is our expression of gratitude for God’s grace, freely bestowed upon us. As we live our lives in all settings and at all times, we are *being* the church!

This doesn’t mean churches of our day (I’ll call them “organized churches”) are entirely bad. The organized church can provide much-needed support to individuals as they raise their children or endure a rough patch in life. It can help individuals to connect with one another, and to be reminded that God is important! There was a time when the entire life of my family revolved around the organized church, and it served a great purpose in that era of our lives.

But we can seek God and study His revelation and worship and serve Him even if we never set foot inside the door of an organized church.

A word of caution – if you do choose to attend an organized church, do not believe all that you hear from the preacher or Bible teachers. Much error and confusion has found its way in, and while it may seem minor and relatively innocent ... it sets us down the path toward thinking the Bible is inconsistent and imperfect. And then we lose our compass for truly understanding God.

So, seek the truth directly from God’s revelation to mankind – the Bible!

The Bible

If the Bible truly is God’s revelation to us, we should be giving it serious consideration. But studying the Bible doesn’t mean simply memorizing Scriptures,

though surely there is benefit in that. We must focus on how all the parts of the Bible fit together if we are to understand God's progressive plan – how He worked in the past with various groups of people – and how He is working in the world today.

A good place to start would be finding a *reliable* Bible translation – not one that is dumbed-down making it easy to read – for great concessions are made by the translators to pull this off, and much truth is hidden or even distorted.

Again, I feel compelled to stress ... what is important is finding time to study the Bible and seeking to understand God's *progressive* plan as described in the Bible; throughout the history of mankind and toward His ultimate goal that is assured for us.

And so, while I may, at times, comment on politics and government affairs – I seek to focus more intently on spiritual things – and on making God's revelation more accessible to the masses. This is greatly needed as we face so many challenges in the present day.

I have several writing projects underway and look forward to sharing them in the coming months. So, secure a good Bible (if you don't already have one) and fasten your seat belts. My recommendations ...

1. The Concordant Version (see Concordant.org). This is a very consistent, literal translation – not the easiest to read, but great for study as it leaves as much human bias out of the translation effort as possible.
2. Young's Literal Version.
3. The Companion Bible. This is the King James Version, but with MANY notes from E. W. Bullinger who shares information from the original Hebrew and Greek, as well as some great insights.

Now let me end with this thought! The good news is that God is in control. Despite all that may be happening around us at any given moment, God is in control. This does not mean we will not face sorrow and tragedy and failure. It does not mean we will escape suffering and death. It does not mean that the governments of this world will not, at some point, painfully crumble and fail.

But it *does* mean that as bad as things may seem, the ultimate outcome is assured by God. And (spoiler alert) it is an amazing future that has been assured!

So, despite what we may be going through in the present, be encouraged. God is in control, so all is well!

This overview contains the thoughts and opinions of the author and is a work in progress as his study of the Scriptures continues. Some things that God has revealed are very clear. That Christ died for our sins; that He was entombed; and that He was roused (1 Corinthians 15:3) is clear. That all are to be ultimately reconciled to God thru the work of Christ is also very clear (1 Corinthians 15:20-28). But on many specifics in the Scriptures there are a variety of interpretations and opinions, and none should conclude they have the complete and final understanding on these matters that are less clear. The reader is encouraged to consider various opinions, but to study and to think for himself. Within the Body of Christ we should study and discuss our understandings so as to mutually reach a more complete understanding of that which God has revealed.

Unless otherwise noted, Scriptures are taken from the Concordant Literal New Testament

*and the Concordant Version of the Old Testament. Concordant Publishing Concern,
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