

Understanding Praying for National Leaders

We are to pray for our national leaders according what Paul wrote to Timothy:

1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NKJV) – *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.*

Does this say anything to us about Christians wanting to overthrow governments or even just speaking against their national leader?

Referring to the above scripture quote, Ray Ashmore makes these points in his book 'Thy Kingdom Come':

“This passage is one of the most misquoted passages of our day. People take this to mean that we should pray for leadership that they might be “Christians,” legislating cultural change based upon biblical values. This activity is in the hope that Christian precepts might rule the nation’s laws and courts. Think that do you? Not so. Look at the passage. What are we to pray for? No, really, look at it. What does it say?

Pray that we might go about our task of proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom and of extending the King’s dominion to those who are dead in their trespasses and sins, growing the “holy nation” within the nation without undue interference from anyone. Pray that we might live godly lives in quietness and peace, without governmental or social harassment or persecution. “That we may lead...” That is the purpose of our praying...

To make 1 Tim 2:6 support our Christian political and social agenda is a significant misinterpretation and it displays the degree to which the church has drifted from its mandate. Cultural change will indeed take place as a by-product of Christians living a kingdom lifestyle. But Christians are to be totally focused on the mission of the kingdom, not the by-products of that mission. Proclaiming, demonstrating and sacrificing for the kingdom—that is our holy purpose, nothing less, nothing more.

To put it another way, culture can never be equated with the kingdom of God. The kingdom is distinct from and in tension with even a “Christianized” culture...

That’s why we need to be praying the 1 Timothy prayer the way it was meant to be prayed.

What is the Christian’s responsibility to his resident nation’s government? We are to pay taxes, vote if one’s government allows, and obey all ordinances that don’t conflict with our faith. We are to pray that leaders will ensure our freedom to proclaim and extend the kingdom, and pray that they will ensure a peaceful social order. Other than that, even as Americans with constitutional rights, we are to be kingdom focused, not nation focused, not culture focused. We are to be priestly and prophetic voices in the culture. But if we’ve lost our kingdom identity, how can we speak with clarity about the truths of God to those in our nation?

The Kingdom of God has a governmental authority, a heavenly culture, and a set of values. What is the government of the kingdom? Is it the same as our nation of residence? What is the culture of the kingdom? Is it the same as the world system around us? What are the values of the kingdom? Are they the same as the unsaved people in our political party of choice? Are they the values of our favorite media personalities?

Televangelists running for office, preachers promoting a “morality” of the majority, family focused ministers converting to political lobbying, Christian lawyers advocating social change through judicial means, these are examples to us that we have, as a Christian people in America, misunderstood the Kingdom and our place in it. We’ve skewed our understanding of the scriptures to fit our culturally conditioned predispositions. And while these Christian leaders have accomplished some lasting value in their ministries, they have diverted many of us from authentic kingdom-focused living.”¹

So, be a Kingdom-focussed worker in our culture and allow the Kingdom you carry to touch society wherever you go – as the Spirit leads – so that righteous changes occur in alignment with Heaven. And...

Uphold our national leader and cease being a rebel.

Laurence

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