

Our American Heritage

Does God require Justice?

Every time Mary and I take a different route than the one we normally take, whether going to church or wherever, it seems that invariably we see a new church; or at least one we hadn't seen before. We are constantly amazed at the number of churches there are in the area!

So, the question may logically be asked, "why another church?" Why Church of the King, McAllen? Surely with all the churches around, you could find one to go to without starting another new one? It does seem so, doesn't it.

I'll bet every one of those churches had a reason for their beginning. Some of them might even be good reasons.

We obviously believe that ours is a good reason.

We have seen something that is lacking in the churches. Not just churches in this area, but churches in general throughout the state and even the nation. This is not to say that there are not some very good churches; churches doing great works for God.

What we see is a lot of evangelism and personal ministry being done, a lot of individuals getting their needs met. This is good. We believe in personal ministry. As a matter of fact our elders prayed for one of our members just a couple of weeks ago that was to have surgery the following day. The next day when the doctor examined her, he found that she no longer needed the surgery. We are thankful. Praise God! We believe that such examples of God's goodness in our midst is a wonderful thing, and necessary if we are to be a legitimate expression of the body of Christ.

When we say that something is lacking, please understand that we are talking about the church of which we are a part. If we see a problem in the church, then we share in the blame, if indeed blame is to be meted out.

Jesus said in Mathew 23:23 when he was pronouncing the woes to the scribes and Pharisees, "you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: **justice** and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done without leaving the others undone. Have we who are the Church, neglected one of the weightier matters? How about **justice** as it relates to the governing of our nation? Why is abortion now the law of the land? What about taxes? Did you ever consider that the last five of the 10 commandments are about stealing? Don't steal your neighbor's life; his wife; his property, or his good name. And number 10; don't even think about it! If stealing is this important to God, then why is it okay for our government to steal our property? How many of you think you own property? If you think you own it, just stop paying your taxes on it. You will find that you don't own it at all. You are just renting it from the government. Stop paying rent and the real owner will evict you.

Does that sound radical? Did you know that at the time of the revolution, the colonists tried to get the Canadians to join them in throwing off the tyrannical King George? They weren't interested. They didn't have the Colonist's understanding of the religious principles for doing so, and so they were fine with whatever the king mandated. They just received it as their lot in life. The Colonists warned them that if they didn't join them, the time would come when the king would even **tax their property!** This was unthinkable to the colonists. They saw the ownership of property as one of God's blessings – an inalienable right, outside the parameters of man's meddling.

Let us consider the state of our nation today as relates to its moral condition. Is there any doubt in anyone's mind that it could be better? Was there a time in our history when it was better? If so when and why? I strongly suggest that the farther you go back in history, the better the moral character of the people seems to be. Also, the farther you go back, the more influence the church had in society. This, my friends and neighbors, is what is lacking in the church today. Influence on our society.

In "Democracy in America", written in 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville said "There are certain populations in Europe whose unbelief is equaled only by their ignorance and debasement; while in America, one of the freest and most enlightened nations in the world, people fulfill with fervor all the outward duties of religion". De Tocqueville pronounced religion "the foremost of the political institutions in America". As a result "while the law permits Americans to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving, and forbids them to commit, what is rash or unjust".

The church of the 20th century was cowed, or buffaloed, or just plain intimidated into believing that it had no place in the public arena; that the administering of the nation's business was somehow out-of-bounds for the church. No, the church was to minister to widows and orphans and heal the sick – no wait – the government can do that too, so you folks just sit behind your walls and hold hands and sing Cum-bah-yah and WE'll take care of the important business. Have you not heard **of separation of church and state?**

I ask you folks, aren't you tired of being lectured to by a bunch of heathens about what the church's job is? The colonists understood the real meaning of "separation" long before these neo-constitutionalists ever came along. They understood that church and state had separate jurisdictions, both under the **same law** of Almighty God and that both would answer to HIM for the way they carried out their respective duties.

Let's look at a little bit of history. Just what constitutes the foundation of this, the most powerful and richest nation in the history of the world? Why is this so? Why are not other nations as rich and powerful? Surely it's not because of natural resources. Many nations have more natural resources. Why look at our neighbor to the south. Mexico has much more in the way of oil and gas, plus just about every metal you can name in abundance. It can't be that.

Some say its freedom that makes us great. If that is all it takes, every country that has had a successful revolution should be rich and powerful. After all haven't many "oppressors" been overthrown? What about France? Why did "freedom" for them just end in more and more bloodshed?

No, it's something much different than just material wealth and freedom. Our country's foundation must be seen in events that go back much farther than a revolution to throw off a tyrant. We must look at a little nation called Scotland. To a people who had a great visitation from God. To a people who saw such a great revival that 80% of them were converted. John Knox, that great Calvinist preacher had cried out to God "give me Scotland or I die", and 4 out of every 5 of them truly believed God and were born again in newness of life. As a result they began to look to God and to his word, the bible, as the guide for every area of life.

Their new found Calvinism was not so much appreciated in merry old England. The King proclaimed that he was the head of the church and these unruly Scots were to submit to him in all matters concerning the church. The Scots were having none of it. No! they said Christ is the head of the church and no man can have what is God's alone. They were so convinced that what they read in the bible was true that they were willing to die for it. Die for it they did. They were slaughtered on the fields of Cullodin by the much superior English armies; superior in numbers only. The Scots have always been the fiercest fighters of any in the world. They have always struck fear in the hearts of their enemies because of their ability to wage war. The English just overwhelmed them with sheer numbers.

Meanwhile, this Calvinism had been having its effect in England and the Puritan movement was spreading among the believers there. At first the believer's thought they could best serve their cause by staying in the Church of England and reforming it from the inside. Some left and were called Separatists. They went to Holland to find Religious freedom but were soon disillusioned and went back to England where they secured a charter from the king to start a colony in the new world – America. We all know the story of the Mayflower, William Bradford, and the Plymouth Colony. Some ten years later another group led by John Winthrop came to Massachusetts. This began a new experiment in the History of Religion in the world.

These Puritans believed in and established a new kind of government. At first Bradford's group attempted to hold everything in common. According to their charter all property was to be commonly owned and the produce would be equally divided. It didn't work. As we now know, socialism or communism never works. (All of us that is except a few college professors and radicals left over from the '60's). Bradford abandoned the charter's mandate and divided up the land, giving an equal share to each family, telling them they were on their own. The individual families would be responsible for their own land, their own production, and the dispersing of whatever they produced as they saw fit. The first capitalistic enterprise in America was under way. The rest is, as they say, history.

Self-government and self reliance proved to be very productive for the colonists. So much so, that they saw it as God's way for man in every area of life. They saw the connection between God's law and freedom. They understood that only under God's law could man ever rise to his fullest potential and thus accomplish what they were convinced was God's will in the earth – that is to subdue the earth and take dominion over it. In fact, they felt if they were not successful in conquering the frontier, they were sinning against God.

This connection between liberty and God's law has permeated our society from those early days even until now, although most people are not aware of it. Several years ago I heard **Lady Margaret Thatcher** give a speech to a political women's forum. In the speech, she used the words "freedom" and "liberty" so many times that I lost count, but the thing I noticed was that she never used either of these words by itself. She **always** added 2 words – "under law". **Freedom under law, liberty under law.** It's as if she wanted to impress something on America that she saw as lacking in our society. Something that used to be obvious but that has been forgotten.

The Puritan influence is what set this country up to be what it is today. In 1740 through the preaching and leadership of **Jonathon Edwards**, the revival that is referred to as The Great Awakening brought the Puritan ideal back into focus. It had waned in the previous 100 years, as is common it seems, and periodically it has to be re-introduced and re-taught as the foundation of our society. The Great Awakening only lasted a few years but its effect lasted until the time of the revolution.

The founders of the Republic understood the necessity of **Justice** in government. They knew that God required justice if any nation or any people was to prosper. They petitioned the king with their many grievances. George Washington called a meeting in 1774 at the Fairfax County Courthouse for the purpose of laying out these grievances. The result of that meeting was a document called "**The Fairfax County Resolves**". This is one of the most important of all the founding documents, but schools don't teach it nowadays and very few people know about it. What it illustrates is that, (contrary to much of what is taught today), the American Revolution was not the result of an impulsive craving for independence, but was rather a mature, determined quest for freedom and **justice**.

King George called the American Revolution "The Presbyterian Revolt". And it is true. It was the **Scottish Presbyterian doctrine of representative republican government** that the colonists saw as God's way of governing nations. Those Scots who died at Cullodin believed it, and their sons and grandsons believed it when they stood with Washington at Yorktown. You see, 75% of Washington's officers were Scottish.

So what does this have to do with what we are doing now? We at Church of The King believe that our heritage is important. We believe that to neglect it is to leave ourselves open for the judgment of Almighty God. We believe that we are responsible as a nation to recognize this great heritage and to return to the purpose of God as He made it known to those men to whom we owe our very existence. We believe that we will be held

accountable if we fail to **recover that vision that inspired our ancestors – to be a “City set on a hill that could not be hid”**.

We are praying for wisdom and guidance as we search for ways to bring this message to the most people we can. We recognize that we are small and seemingly insignificant, but if we are right, just look at the opportunity God has to show Himself strong. Our size does not concern us. Our only concern is that we do what we believe God has shown us to do.

Now, you are probably saying, here comes the pitch. Be at peace. We don't need money. Thank God He is providing quite well. If you are looking for a church home, we would be happy to welcome you into our fellowship, but even that is not our main concern. Our main concern is that people hear our message and if they agree with it, help to spread it. If you have a pastor that you love, please remind him that we need to tell our people about what is going on in government. Don't leave it to talk radio. Remind him that we need to hold our representatives accountable and that we as Christians, are Americans too, and as God's representatives on earth, we are responsible to Him for the things our government does, whether good or bad.

I'll close with this:

Let us not leave these weightier matters: justice, mercy, and faith, undone.

C White