

“RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTS A NATION”

INTRODUCTION

A. 1st Peter 2:13-14

According to the word of the Lord, the fundamental purpose of government is *“for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good”* (14).

B. Romans 13:1

God appoints the powers that be. In the federal republic that is the United States of America, the manner in which God appoints our rulers is popular elections by the people.

C. Proverbs 14:34

As Americans go to the polls soon, will the people cast their votes in favor of righteousness or wickedness? This and every election results in our national exaltation or disgrace.

I. INTEGRITY AMONG RULERS

A. Proverbs 16:12; 29:2

We should seek to elect morally upright leaders. While it is unlikely that we'll be able to elect many Christians to public office, we can certainly do our best to eliminate candidates who are blatantly sinful in their behavior.

B. Proverbs 25:4-5

One indication of a leader's morality is whom he chooses to associate with. Are his advisers upstanding citizens or not?

C. Proverbs 29:4; Exodus 23:8

Bribery is contrary to justice and will overthrow a land. It blinds discernment, which is why our leaders ought to be free from undue influence.

D. 2nd Samuel 23:1-3

Since *“he who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God”* it is important that we who elect those rulers base our decisions on matters of godliness, not economics, education, or other issues.

II. CRIMINAL PUNISHMENT

A. Romans 13:2-4

1. Underscoring the fact that the fundamental purpose of government includes punishing evildoers (1st Peter 2:14), we are further informed that rulers are empowered by God with the sword in order *“to execute wrath on him who practices evil”*.
2. This fact must be borne in mind when casting ballots for:
 - a. District Attorneys and Attorneys General, who will prosecute criminals.
 - b. Judges, who will sentence criminals.
 - c. Legislators, both Assemblymen and Senators on the State level and Congressmen and Senators on the federal level, who write the laws.
 - d. Executives, namely the Governors of the various states and the President of the United States, who:
 - i. Will appoint some Judges.
 - ii. Will either sign into law or veto the bills passed by the legislature.
 - iii. And who have the power to commute sentences and pardon convicts.

B. Ezra 7:26

1. Legitimate methods of executing judgment include:
 - a. The death penalty.

- i.** Opponents equate execution with murder, believing that if two acts have the same result, then those two acts are morally equivalent. This is absurd.

 - α.** When a buyer defaults on a loan is the repossession of an automobile equivalent to grand theft auto? Both result in loss of property.
 - β.** Is kidnapping for ransom the same as legally incarcerating a felon? Both involve imprisonment against one's will.
 - γ.** Is rape identical to consensual sex? Both result in intercourse.
- ii.** **Genesis 9:6**
Capital punishment is necessary in view of what one destroys in the commission of a murder.
- b.** Banishment.

 - i.** This refers to exile or deportation, the forced removal of a person from a particular jurisdiction.
 - ii.** Current relevant examples include:

 - α.** Banning sexual predators from living near schools.
 - β.** Deporting illegal aliens.
- c.** Confiscation.

 - i.** This could be the legal repossession of property when a buyer defaults on the loan.
 - ii.** It could be the dispossession of such property when a citizen defaults on his taxes.
 - iii.** It involves seizing contraband, like illegal drugs.
- d.** Imprisonment.

 - i.** Opponents argue that rehabilitation is most important and that prisons just cost too much.

- ii. Incarceration, however, is a justifiable means of punishing the wicked.
- 2. Judgment ought to be executed *“speedily”*.
 - a. Opponents of the death penalty claim that capital punishment is not an effective deterrent to crime, but if that is accurate at all it is only because executions are delayed so very long.
 - i. The time a capital offender remains on death row prior to execution **averages** approximately **ten years**.
 - ii. There are extreme cases in this country in which murderers have been awaiting the punishment of death for over **thirty years**.
 - b. **Ecclesiastes 8:11**

If those guilty of capital crimes were executed right away, the penalty would prove to be an effective deterrent for others. Since it is not, others are emboldened to commit crimes they otherwise would have been afraid to commit.

III. NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT

- A. **Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8**
 - 1. Drug use is explicitly forbidden in the scriptures as behavior that will keep one out of heaven.
 - a. The word translated as “sorcery” (**Galatians 5:20**) is the Greek word “pharmakeia” which means “medication” or “pharmacy”. Drugs were used in the deceptive efforts of ancient sorcery, as spell giving potions, thus the connection.
 - b. The word translated as “sorcerers” (**Revelation 21:8**) is the Greek word “pharmakeus” which means “druggists”, “poisoners”, or “pharmacists”.
 - 2. **1st Timothy 5:23**

The Lord does allow the minimal use of otherwise restricted substances for medicinal purposes. We do not oppose legitimate pharmacology, but there is obviously a difference between using medicine and abusing narcotics.

B. 1st Thessalonians 5:1-9; 1st Peter 5:8

Christians must be characterized by soberness in order to be prepared for Judgment. Otherwise, Satan will overtake us.

1. Galatians 5:22-23; 2nd Peter 1:5-6

Christians should maintain self-control, but while under the influence of narcotics, one is not in control of himself.

2. Proverbs 23:29-35

Alcohol consumption, as with most other drugs, results in the user being unaware of his actions and losing his inhibitions.

C. 2nd Peter 2:19; Romans 6:16; 1st Corinthians 6:12

Narcotics are addictive and godly people should be careful to avoid addictions of any kind in that they draw our allegiance away from God and force a commitment to a dangerous habit.

IV. HOMOSEXUALITY

A. 1st Corinthians 6:9-10

Homosexuality will prevent entrance to heaven.

B. Matthew 19:4-6

Homosexuals want to enjoy the benefits of marriage. Yet, Christ Jesus affirmed what God had revealed from the beginning, that **man and woman** are to be joined as one flesh.

C. Genesis 1:27-28

Homosexuals want to enjoy the benefits of parenthood. God specifically created **male and female**, then instructed **them** to **be fruitful and multiply**. Thus, parental rights must be limited to heterosexual couples.

D. Romans 1:26-27

Homosexuality is definitively **unnatural**. If there were anything natural about homosexuality, then homosexual couples could have children without resorting to adoption, but they can't!

E. 1st Timothy 1:8-11

The law of the gospel forbids homosexuality, as should every ordinance of man.

V. ABORTION

A. Ezekiel 16:20-21; Jeremiah 19:4-9

God condemned the ancients for slaughtering their own children to worship false gods. Because the land was filled with the blood of the innocents, God foretold of Judah's sure destruction. Is burning a child alive any more grievous a sin than tearing it apart piece by piece within the womb? In 1973 the United States Supreme Court declared it a constitutionally guaranteed right for women to slaughter their own children in the womb. Since this land is filled with the blood of innocents can we expect to endure as a nation much longer?

B. Exodus 21:22-25

1. The Old Law penalized those who harmed the unborn, life for life or wound for wound.
2. The reason is that God regards the occupant of the womb as a child.
 - a. What people today refer to as a "fetus" or an "embryo" God identifies as a "child".
 - i. **Ruth 1:11**
The Bible refers to "sons" within the "womb", not fetuses, not embryos, but sons.
 - ii. **Job 3:3**

At the very point of **conception**, Job was already considered “a male *child*”. This was not determined at a certain point during gestation, but at conception.

iii. **Luke 1:36, 41, 44**

Since conception, John was already considered a “son”. Yet unborn, he was a “babe” who “leaped” in the womb of his mother, Elizabeth.

iv. **Genesis 25:21-22**

Prior to their births, Jacob and Esau were “children” who “struggled” within the womb.

v. My own eyes have beheld the limbs, bones, organs, and heartbeats of my children in utero. Before she was born, Katrina often got the hiccups. While still in the womb, Hunter and Orion pushed and kicked each other. These are the activities of living human beings.

b. The development of a child in the womb is the marvelous work of God.

i. **Psalms 139:13-16**

When children are growing in the womb, God is at work.

ii. **Ecclesiastes 11:5**

His work is beyond our comprehension.

C. **Proverbs 6:16-19**

Remember, God **hates** hands that shed innocent blood!

VI. ENVIRONMENTALISM

A. **Romans 1:18-25**

It is wrong to “worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator”, but environmentalists elevate the earth, which God created through Christ

(Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16-17), to the status of “mother”, as if we owe our lives to “mother earth” instead of God our Father.

B. Genesis 1:26-28

After God created the earth and put man on it, He ordered man to take control of the earth and all its resources.

C. Genesis 8:22

“Climate change” is of no concern to those who trust God.

D. Mark 13:31; 2nd Peter 3:7, 10

“Save the planet!” is the mantra of the environmentalist, but such is a futile endeavor for God will certainly destroy it.

E. Romans 1:16; Mark 16:15-16

The only saving we ought to be concerned with is the saving of souls through the gospel of Christ.

CONCLUSION

A. Obviously, there are many more moral issues which could be discussed, yet it is simply unrealistic to believe that our government will soon outlaw such things as fornication, drunkenness, or divorce without cause.

B. We do know, however, that those who would say “You can’t legislate morality” are seriously mistaken. Guarding morality is the very purpose of legislation.

C. Exodus 22:28; Ecclesiastes 10:20

Regardless of who wins in the upcoming election, we must be careful not to curse them.

D. Titus 3:1

Instead, we must obey our rulers.

E. 1st Timothy 2:1-4

We must pray for our leaders to make decisions which will promote godliness. This is good in God’s sight, who desires the salvation of all.