

How Should We Vote?

Sermon September 19, 2021

Scripture reading: Jeremiah 29:4-8, 11-14 and Matthew 28:18-20

Golden verse: *Seek the peace and prosperity of the country to which I have carried you ... Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.*

Jeremiah 29:7

During the past few weeks, our Canadian TV channels have been filled with political campaigns and some related stories. On the streets, we see individuals or groups with all kinds of signs sharing with us their feelings about different parties. At our door, some people showed up campaigning and asking for our support. The phone is ringing innumerable times political parties sharing their values and trying to convince us how to vote.

Today, I would like to invite all of you to make the effort tomorrow and VOTE. Your vote counts. Your vote can make a difference in this country. Your ONE VOTE can bring more glory of God here in Canada.

I am inviting all of us to care for the future of our Country, as God is encouraging us. Let us do everything we can to restore the God Almighty's glory in our country.

We grew up obeying God, memorizing and respecting the Ten Commandments, praying the Lord's Prayer daily. During North American history, both in Canada and in the United States, we had leaders who, in all their actions, confessed and professed that they led a country under God's leadership and God is the supreme authority. In all their decrees, they prioritized God and God's expectations and, as leaders, asked their citizens to accept and respect God's authority when they created laws.

With our vote, we have to continue to protect our Christian heritage, respecting other people's culture and faith. We have to respect their convictions and we have to defend ours. We have to raise our voices about our faith values, and we have to continue to do our work based on our faith values. We have the right to call our members of Parliament to take our faith values in consideration representing us, the voters. We have to raise our voices, considering that the Lord's Prayer is not dividing, but unites people; it will not damage but will build our country.

We have to express our faith, showing in words and actions that God is important for us, maybe even more important than it was in the past. We have to share with this society that God is not an enemy, but our best support.

There was a time in the history, when church and political Government were working together. In our society, these two are totally separated. The Government works without asking the churches for support, but they cannot function without God's support. For this, dear beloved, I am encouraging all of you, to continue to be a brave Church supporter, messaging to the world the same message, that God can exist without our support, but we cannot exist without God's support. God has a future without our help, but we have no future without God's help.

I am sharing with you, just as information, that at this time, the present Hungarian Government, which is under a huge attack by many false accusations by some liberal Governments both in Europe and North America, is fully supporting the historical congregations financially and acknowledging the importance of their spiritual and ethical work. To give you a few example: two years ago, The Hungarian Presbyterian Church in Toronto received a 2.5 million Canadian Dollar donation from the Hungarian Government to build a mission and support center in Toronto for Canadian Hungarians. The same way, the Hungarian Baptist Church received almost the same amount to build a new church in Toronto, where God's people would gather to worship the Lord, and to support each other spiritually. The First Hungarian Presbyterian Church in Vancouver received a \$37,000 Canadian donation from the Hungarian Government to refresh their church building.

Hungary is not nearly as wealthy as Canada, but the present Government recognized the important of churches and the importance of faith and faith-based spirituality, and they do their very best for those faith groups who are engaged to build the country and a better future.

Hungary has a prime minister who, every Sunday, attends their Hungarian Reformed home church with their four children, and Victor Orban, as a Prime Minister, prays every Sunday in the church for the country and for the government.

As you know, in Washington D.C., there is a church, which is well known, since the presidents of the United States used to worship there more or less regularly.

I am glad to share with you, that here in Canada, we are still in a great position, since, as far as I know, on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, every week there is a Bible Study for those who would like to attend.

I am encouraging all of us to pray these days for our elections. Paul encourages us to pray for our leaders, that they should lead our country in peace.

God cares about our country and can provide us a Government led by His Spirit. God is always in control, and God still cares about our elections.

Today I will set before you a few Biblical principles that I hope will inform you about how you should think of government and politics, as well as inspire you with unshakable confidence in the supremacy and sovereignty of God over all things.

Be assured that I have no intention of endorsing a particular candidate or political party. I will highlight some truths from the Bible that will give direction to how you should vote. But when you step into that booth tomorrow, you will be there with God and with your conscience.

1. The structure of authority in any particular political system comes from God. Government is used to lead and help people.

Paul, in Romans 13:1, said: *“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”*

2. We should pray to God to give us a Government that rules with the power of His Spirit.

I always admired those Prime Ministers and Presidents who were not ashamed but proud of their Christian faith, who participated in church services, and were ready to confess their faith in God. Also, they showed their obedience in the way they talked about God.

We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 1:3)

3. God not only controls the Church’s history, but also the history of the “secular” world as well.

I recall what Jesus himself said to Pontius Pilate, who appeared to hold Jesus' life in his hands. *Pilate said to Jesus, "Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above"* (John 19:10-11a).

In the Book of Daniel, we read: *"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings."* (Daniel 2:20-21).

4. God has influence over the hearts and minds of kings, rulers, and elected officials to do what He wants to be done.

In Proverbs, we read that *"The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will"* (Proverbs 21:1). And, if it's true of the "king", then it is no less true of presidents, senators, congressmen, governors, and mayors!

God says about Cyrus, the King of Babylon: *"He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose."* (Isaiah 44:28)

Paul urges *"that supplications, prayer, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way"* (1 Timothy 2:1-2). We are to pray that God would touch their spirits, move upon their hearts, change their thinking, and shape their character.

5. Our responsibility to honour and submit to the government of our country is not dependent on whether or not we voted for its leaders or like them.

Peter tells us, without hesitation, to *"be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution,"* whether emperors or kings, and to *"honour"* them. (1 Peter 2:13)

We, Christians, are not first citizens of any earthly nation but citizens of the kingdom of God. Paul wrote in Philippians 3:20, *"Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."* But that does not mean we have nothing to do with politics or the government that God has placed over us.

6. Christians have a responsibility, as citizens of both heaven and earth, to influence for good the government under which they live. As Christians, we

cannot withdraw from politics and politicians, but we have to pray for them and influence them.

7. When you vote, you should ask the question: Which candidate or which political party is most effective in promoting moral righteousness and praising good when it appears? Which candidate or which political party is most sincerely committed to the Biblical values?

I hope that this sermon provides you with a measure of perspective as you vote tomorrow.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18), declares Jesus. And he means it! That includes every government in the world.

Whoever is elected Prime Minister on September 20, 2021, is among those small ‘k’ “kings” over whom Jesus rules as capital ‘K’ “King”!

Regardless of who wins tomorrow, Jesus is still *“King of kings and Lord of lords.”* (Revelation 19:16)

No matter how things turn out tomorrow after the elections, or on any day thereafter, Jesus is still seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. Regardless of the outcome on elections, Jesus will not have failed. Political events are always and will ever be in his hands, no matter the results. And regardless of how you vote and regardless of who wins, be certain that your faith and confidence and hope are in Jesus Christ, Lord over all of life in heaven and upon the earth! Amen