TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Ken Coleman
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Bryant Perkins

#797 Lord, We Come Before Thee Now
#431 Break Thou the Bread of Life

Scripture Reading by: Rock Cary
#380 Jesus' Sacrifice Medley

Communion Devotional by: Robert Ward
Lord's Supper and Contribution

Give Me That Old Time Religion
Sermon: Guest Speaker: Tim Perkins
"That Old Time Religion"
1 Corinthians 2:1-2

#911 Bring Christ Your Broken Life
#705 A Common Love
Closing Prayer by: James Scott

Our small groups will not meet tonight.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Oct. 27, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

The Church's Mission

Over the last few weeks, we have studied three principles that run throughout all Scripture to help orient us in the political realm: the sovereignty of God, the Lordship of Christ, and God's people as a holy nation. Now we want to turn our attention to application, not encompassing specific scenarios, but in terms of the overall attitude of the church and Christians toward the state. A number of points could be made, but we will limit ourselves to two: the mission of the church and, next week, the method suitable to accomplishing that mission.

Mistaken Mission
The primary divergence between the understanding we have advocated here and the characteristic stance of contemporary American Christians is probably a disagreement over the mission of the church. The typical view is that the church has a responsibility to reshape culture so that it reflects God's will as closely as possible. This approach is logical on an intuitive level: if God's way of life is the ideal, as all Christians would surely agree, then it only makes sense that it would be desirable to have it widely implemented in society. Part of the role of the church is to see that through by whatever pragmatic means are available.

In the United States, that means asserting the Constitutional right to advocate for policies that promote a Christian worldview. Fundamentally, many American Christians tend to construe their relationship to the government in terms of what is constitutionally permissible instead of what their Lord requires. In other words, they act as Americans who happen to be Christians rather than Christians who happen to be Americans.

Scriptural Mission
As natural as that attitude might be, it is not the Biblical mission of the church. Consider the statement of Peter that heads an entire section on Christian ethics in **1 Peter 2:11-12:** *Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.* Peter envisions God's people as converting outsiders through their conduct—bringing them from out of the world and into God's holy nation—so that they might glorify God at the judgment. There is no thought of forcing the world to comply with God's will. Instead, the goal is to persuade unbelievers and, consistent with the practice of Christians, for them to voluntarily submit themselves as servants of God. You see, Jesus did not come to make the world a better place; he came to call people out of the world.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Rickey Lucas is having pain throughout his body. The Dr. will be trying some form of blocker to reduce/control his pain.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Oscar Cantu, Jennifer Stelly, Dr. Hugo Thomas, Veronica Valant, Steve Ward, Geri Cryer, Gloria McKelroy, Yalonda Jackson, Cassandra Valent, Linda Frank, Scott Overton

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday, Oct. 28th at 5:30 p.m..

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Nov. 5th at 8:-00 a.m.

Homecoming is today, Oct. 27th. We will have a catered meal after morning service and will need to provide desserts.

Food Bank

We served 126 families on Thursday, Oct. 17th at our food bank. That equals to 396 individuals. We had 20 volunteers.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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Christian political activism fails to recognize the difference between the church and the world, between God's Kingdom and the kingdoms of the earth. The central disagreement here is not really about morals, but the acknowledgment that Jesus is Lord. Christian ethics are fundamentally about following Jesus; they are nonsensical divorced from his story and from his people. We cannot expect the world to willingly accept the ethical standards of the church for the simple reason that it does not serve the same Lord. But let's imagine culture was somehow transformed on the basis of moral values abstracted from Christ – that would *still* not fulfill the church's mission. Society would be a place more amenable to Christians, sure. But it would still be lost.

This behavior is inconsistent with, even opposed to, our actual mission. Employing the Bible as a moral guidebook waters down the exclusive claims of Christianity and makes it subservient to the state in promoting a generic public virtue. In clamoring for a common public morality, we are acting as better Americans than Christians.

Stanley Hauerwas states it profoundly when he argues that "the first social task of the church—the people capable of remembering and telling the story of God we find in Jesus—is to be the church and thus help the world understand itself as world." (*The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics,* p. 100) Our mission is not to make the world more comfortable for ourselves. Nor is it to improve the world as benevolent overlords. Our mission is to offer an alternative to the world in being God's people.

The church does not have a mandate for its contemporary attempt to engage in cultural engineering. In fact, rather than positioning itself as something other than the world, it unwittingly undermines its mission through such actions. Now the church appears as just one more worldly special interest attempting to push its agenda in the marketplace of ideas.

Most importantly, adopting this as a proxy for evangelism by "Christianizing" the world disrupts the more difficult mission it actually has been given: bringing people out of the world and into the Kingdom of God. We don't need political change. We need renewed focus on conversion—not in the individualistic sense in which it is often understood in the evangelical world, but through incorporation into God's alternative society.

Bryant Perkins