



What do you think of the election?

A question I've heard frequently of late. Chances are you have too. Like you I have lots of thoughts on the election and the events that have occurred after it. I pray that by the time you read this we will have a president-elect. But the thoughts that really matter aren't the ones of "private citizen and voter David Dauk." The thoughts that are important are the ones "Pastor Dauk" has that are based on God's word from the Scriptures.

Several passages are instructive for us here:

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.[2] Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.[3] For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.[4] For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.[5] Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.[6] This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing.[7] Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Romans 13:1-7

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone [2] for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. [3] This is good, and pleases God our Savior, [4] who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim 2:1_4

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, [14] or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. [15] For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. [16] Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover up for evil; live as servants of God. [17] Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. 1 Peter 2:13_17

There are many things we can learn about our relationship to our government from those verses. What insights did you get? Two things jump out at me as being particularly relevant right now:

1) The passage from 1 Timothy that urges us to pray. One positive thing I have witnessed as a result of the uncertainty over the election is the fact that Christians are making it a point to pray for our government. If the election has not been decided by the time you read this, take a moment right now to pray for those government officials who have the responsibility of determining the next step. Pray for God to guide the judges in their decisions. Pray for the candidates to seek God's guiding (instead of polls or political advisors) in the decisions they make. Pray for every effort of Satan to be defeated as he seeks to divide our nation and hinder God's plan. Pray for God to raise up people who can bring unity out of this divisive situation. Just pray. And keep praying after the election is finalized. We owe it to our leaders to pray for them. And remember to pray for their salvation (as 1 Tim. 2:4 reminds us). Send your leaders a note telling them that you are praying for them and their families.

2) The first couple verses of the Romans passage remind us that God is ultimately in control. Whoever ends up in office will be there because God has allowed it to happen. God has a plan. He will use whomever is our next president to accomplish His plan. If that person ends up in office as the result of fraud or unscrupulous dealings, there will be consequences to pay (for him and our nation), but God will use that person to accomplish what he knows needs to happen in our nation at this time in history.

Finally, we must remember that it is not the purpose of government to expand the kingdom of God. That is our purpose as individual Christians, sharing the love of Jesus with one person at a time in our individual lives.

So, next time someone asks you "What do you think of the election?" you might say "It has been a good reminder for me to pray for our leaders and our nation, and a reminder that God is ultimately in control and will work his plan through whoever ends up in office."

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net