

## Pastor's Corner

**Christians and Politics**

**February 3, 2010**

Dear Friend,

The other day I was driving with an outspoken man, who happens to also be a Christian. The radio was set to an AM station that was radically conservative. The talk show person was carefully lambasting the current President for his decisions, second guessing everything, and bashing the decisions being made by the powers that be regarding healthcare and the like. My friend frequently joined in to add his wisdom and when we parted ways, the thing that struck me the most about my friend was not that he was a Christian, but that he felt so strongly about how our nation was not being run.

It made me think back to Jesus. His life and ministry showed a complete un-involvement with the local politics of His day. On one occasion when a religious political group tried to trick Him into teaching tax evasion, He was quick to tell them that famous quote: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, and unto God the things that are Gods." Jesus was not involved in politics, because He had something more important to do: share the Good News (Gospel) of the Kingdom of His Father. Not that legislation and governance is not important, it is. But Jesus would not; He could not take time and energy away from the Gospel. And it's the same with His followers. He wants you and me to take the Good News to every person, and not get sidetracked with causes that most of us have no control over except to let them consume our time in discussing and analyzing the different factors involved.

I read something the other day that addresses this point well:

*I worry about the recent surge of power among U.S. Christians, who seem to be focusing more and more on political means. . . . This trend troubles me because the gospel of Jesus was not primarily a political platform. The issues that confront Christians in a secular society must be faced and addressed and legislated, and a democracy gives Christians every right to express themselves. But we dare not invest so much in the kingdom of this world that we neglect our main task of introducing people to a different kind of kingdom, one based solely on God's grace and forgiveness. Passing laws to enforce morality serves a necessary function, to dam up evil, but it never solves human problems. If a century from now all that historians can say about evangelicals of the 1990s is that they stood for family values, then we will have failed the mission Jesus gave us to accomplish: to communicate God's reconciling love to sinners. . . . Nowadays, as the U.S. grows increasingly secularized, it appears that church and state are heading in different directions. The more I understand Jesus' message of the kingdom of God, the less alarm I feel over that trend. Our real challenge, the focus of our energy, should not be to Christianize the United States (always a losing battle) but rather to strive to be God's kingdom in an increasingly hostile world.*

*Philip Yancey  
The Jesus I Never Knew*

What is your focus? To learn daily more about God's kingdom, and His way of doing things, or the current President? Politicians come and go, State of the Union addresses change, but our focus, our mission, is to follow the plans of the Prince of Peace. Everything else is simply a distraction.

Make sure to spend time today studying God's agenda! We're praying for you!

Mark