

A Special Message For America, Part 4

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Date: 19 December 2014

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[0 : 00] Please turn to the Old Testament, to the Book of Psalms, and we'll be looking at Psalm 100 this morning.

Psalm 100, a psalm for thanksgiving. Psalm 100, a psalm for thanksgiving. And the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the Lord is good, and loving kindness is everlasting, and his faithfulness to all generations.

As I mentioned earlier, I had every intention of moving on from the content we've been discussing in connection with my messages for America.

[1 : 42] And we intended to resume our consideration of the transitions in the New Testament, which we believe to be so vital. However, as a result of the message that I delivered last Sunday morning, it became apparent to me, after talking with someone about it, that there obviously is considerable misunderstanding in what I've said.

And I feel that I owe it to everybody to clarify this as much as I can. And I'll do my best to provide time for Q&A; for additional clarification that might be needed from you when we finish this.

In the more than four decades that I have been your pastor, I have never once told you for whom you should vote.

And I'm not going to start now. Frankly, I consider that an insult to your intelligence to tell you who to vote for as if you don't have sense enough to know yourself.

So if I were you, I would be offended at a pastor who tells you who you should vote for. Thank you very much, but I have a mind of my own, should be your response.

[2 : 55] And I would certainly respect that. But I did give an illustration that I'm sure some took the wrong way. And let me clarify what I was talking about.

Even though I have always refrained from telling people for whom they should vote, I don't feel that way about issues. Issues are different. But office holders and those who are running for office are more purely political a lot of times than what the issues are.

So many times we see issues as having moral implications and we make no bones about which side we come down on. And abortion, by the way, it just happens to be one of those.

And there are numerous others that we unashamedly take a position on and will continue to do so. But those of you who have been here for any length of time know that I have been very hard-nosed about encouraging people to get out and register to vote and make sure you go to the polls.

It is your patriotic duty as an American. It is your obligation as a citizen. And when I think of those 400,000 graves in Arlington National Cemetery and realize that those people fought and died for a country that could barely turn out 50% of its electorate for an election, that is shameful.

[4 : 32] That is shameful. We ought to be embarrassed. These people gave their all. And so many Americans can't even show up on election day.

And I attempted to point out the folly of not showing up at the polls. And we have good reason to believe from the last election that there were huge multitudes of Christians who didn't bother to vote because they didn't care for either candidate.

And I gave an illustration about someone who said they were not willing to vote for a Mormon, so they weren't going to go vote at all. And I chided them by saying, do you not realize that when you do not vote at all, rather than going and casting a vote, you give your vote to the other guy?

That's the bottom line. That's exactly what you do. So when you don't care for any of the candidates on the slate, do what I do.

Hold your nose and vote. You vote for the one that you think may do the most good. And if you don't think either one of them can do any good, then vote for the one that you think might do the least

damage.

[6 : 00] But vote. Make your position known. And apparently I didn't make that all that clear because I still wasn't telling anyone for whom they should vote.

I'm just saying that if you don't vote, and even for president, if you don't vote for president, and if a person is elected, you need to understand that that president, whoever he may be, whether he's Republican or Democrat, is going to be possessing the sole authority for the nomination of Supreme Court judges to the bench.

And anybody who thinks that the Supreme Court judges do not involve themselves in politics is just really naive. We know, and the Constitution makes it, I think, clear that the Supreme Court is supposed to be apolitical.

It is not supposed to have political preferences. But hey, these judges are human beings. They've got their own political preferences, and if you think they're going to set them aside and vote without taking them into consideration, you're just very naive.

We all know when certain judges are being, or certain individuals are being considered for the Supreme Court, the media makes it very clear. Well, he's left-leaning, or he's right-leaning, or he's middle of the road.

[7 : 29] And sometimes they're right, and sometimes they miss it, because sometimes a Supreme Court judge surprises everybody by the way they vote. But by and large, you need to keep in mind that you're not only voting for president when you vote, you're voting for the person who will appoint the Supreme Court judge, and this latest 5-4 decision that came down was that which approved same-sex marriage.

So, when the rubber meets the road, it becomes very, very important that people show up at the polls and vote. And I'll say this once again, I've said it many times since I've been here, if you are not registered to vote, and you do not vote, please don't let me know about it.

It would do my blood pressure no good. Okay? And another controversy arose, and I can understand this, but I trust that we will be able to resolve it, and that is this.

I've been told, it's okay, Pastor, it's fine if you preach on moral issues and right and wrong, but don't get into politics, because you've got no business saying anything about politics.

politics, and I have made it quite clear, and I will do so again, that it is an absolute impossibility to separate moral issues from politics, because every political position that is taken is based on someone's idea of morality, and that's the kind of laws we enact.

[9 : 19] and I don't want anybody to take my opinion for that, or my word for that. I've got my trusty New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language.

Bear with me if you will, please. We'll just get this on the record. Moral. Pertaining to character and behavior from the point of view of right and wrong and obligation of duty pertaining to rightness and duty in conduct.

That's the primary meaning. Secondary, conforming to right conduct actuated by a sense of the good, true, and right.

Good, righteous, virtuous. That's the second. The tertiary meaning, concerned with the principles of right and wrong, ethical, moral philosophy, moral values.

Four, acting or suited to act through man's intellect or sense of right, often opposed to physical, moral support.

[10 : 35] Logic, probable as opposed to demonstrative, moral proof, et cetera, and on and on. So, essentially, to simplify this, I think we can say that morality and moral issues simply have to do with what's right and what's wrong.

All right, then the next question is, who is to determine what is right and what is wrong? If you take the position that a great many take in our present day culture of moral relativism, which, by the way, I believe is primarily responsible for the downward spiral of the nation morally, if you take the principle of moral relativism, you are saying that each person decides for themselves what is moral and what is immoral.

Nobody has the right to tell anybody else that they are wrong about anything because it is an individual choice. That's moral relativism.

There's a verse that describes that back in the book of Judges, I believe it is, or in the book of Kings. It said, there was no king in Israel at the time, and every person did that which was right in his own eyes.

That's pretty much close to anarchy. Each person becomes their own authority. Each one is their own judge for what is right or what is wrong. This is an attitude that is pervasive in the nation today and in all of the western world.

[12 : 18] Because moral relativism brings with it a personal freedom with no restrictions. You decide what's right or wrong for you.

Moral absolutism, which is that philosophy that has governed this nation for its probably first, perhaps first 200 years or close to it, is that morality is linked to absolutes.

There are certain fixed principles that are right universally and they constitute an overarching blanket under which everyone is to be governed and everyone is to respect.

We refer to this as a moral north star, like you're looking for direction on a compass. And when we look for direction morally, there is a moral north star that is to be the basis or the platform for our moral behavior.

behavior. And that's pretty much been laid aside. Now, interestingly enough, when people talk in terms of relativism and absolutes, most of them who take the position of moral relativism have no idea that they embrace an impossible situation and that the very name of it is a self-defeating argument.

[13 : 52] And when somebody says, I'm a moral relativist, I don't believe there are any fixed standards. This is all to be determined by the individual.

There are no moral absolutes. All you have to do is say, now, are you making that statement as an absolute or as a relative statement?

Because the thing just breaks down. it's an impossible position to hold. The scriptures embrace moral absolutes all the way through and they are probably best exemplified in that with which everyone is familiar, the Ten Commandments.

They are a list, a digest, if you will, of the moral law that God gave to Israel. and it is embodied and reduced to these ten precepts.

And now there are those suggesting that they be removed, that they be taken from our courthouses, that they be taken from our public buildings because these represent religious values, et cetera, and moral absolutes.

[15 : 13] So this is where the struggle is right now. And this is what we are absolutely up to our eyeballs in dealing with. It's when you try to make application of relativism in practical situations, it breaks down.

For instance, if you're going into a court of law and someone is being tried for a crime and evidence is being presented, is the judge and jury at all concerned with relativism or absolutism?

Think about that. When evidence and facts are presented, are they looking for cold, hard, factual things, or are they looking for opinions and ideas and suggestions?

Of course not. They only want to deal in what is real, what is absolute, what is fixed, what is known for certain. And when you're in a court of law, your opinion doesn't mean anything unless you happen to be called as what they call an expert witness who can testify as to a certain aspect of something.

Because of your degree and your credentials, you can offer an opinion. But by and large, courts, judges and juries are only interested in facts. They're not interested in relativistic anything.

[16 : 44] Only the absolute counts. So that's just one venue in which that can be applied. And when I say that it is an absolute impossibility to deal with morals and stay out of politics, let me ask you a question.

is abortion on demand a moral issue? Of course it is.

And it doesn't make any difference which side you're on. It's a moral issue. Is abortion on demand a political issue?

issue? What makes it a political issue? How can we just keep it a moral issue and not get into the area of politics?

How can we do that? Now think about this. When an issue surfaces in any given culture, like abortion or same-sex marriage or whatever, and people are talking about it.

[17 : 59] All over the country, people are talking about it. They're giving opinions, ideas, pros, cons, but all they're doing is talking about it. Do you know what that is?

They are confining it to an area of just morality and discussion. But what makes it politics? When the government gets involved and somebody says we need a law, they enact legislation, voila,

politics.

It's inevitable and it doesn't make any difference which position you take on the issue. It's political because as long as people are doing nothing but talking about it, it's just a moral issue.

But once officialdom gets involved, whether it is county, city, state, federal, whatever, it immediately leaps into the political limelight and it becomes a moral and a political issue.

It's inevitable. It's just the way things work. So it is impossible to separate these. You cannot separate morality from politics.

[19 : 23] Is same-sex marriage a moral issue? Well, of course it is. But it doesn't have anything to do with politics, right?

Oh, give me a break. Don't you realize what the court just said? They legitimize same-sex marriage for every state and that is a political, legal, official pronouncement on top of the moral issue.

So which is it? Same-sex marriage. Is it moral or is it political? It's both. There is no separation. It's impossible to separate them. Quit trying to do it.

And if anybody is expecting me to do it, I'm not going to scramble my brain with that. I can't do it. No one can do it. You cannot separate these.

We'll just have to live with that. Is homosexuality a moral issue? Sure it is. But you know what? It wasn't always a political issue.

[20 : 29] No, no, no. It wasn't always. And neither was abortion and neither was same-sex marriage. They weren't always political. They were always moral issues. But there was a case that went all the way to the Supreme Court that originated in Texas.

and it had to do, as best memory best serves me, with men, men, gay men who had been arrested and charged with homosexuality.

And the thing went all the way to the Supreme Court and they struck it down and effectively came to the legal conclusion that homosexuality is no longer against the law.

legal. So what does that make it in addition to being a moral issue? Makes it a political issue. It's inevitable. There's no way around it.

We need to recognize that. Is prayer in public schools a moral issue? Sure. Is it a political issue?

[21 : 35] You bet. Supreme Court ruled on that too. You see, when officialdom gets involved in any level, and they're supposed to be involved, I'm not faulting them for that.

That's their job. That's their responsibility. They are supposed to legislate and make laws for the good of the population. And when they do, the issue becomes political.

And it doesn't make any difference if they're Republicans or Democrats or which the majority was.

That's completely beside the point. All I'm trying to do is establish the idea that there is no separation between morality and politics.

And anybody who thinks they can be separated just hasn't thought the issue through. I know this because I believed that at one time. In my youthful, more naive days, I thought, wouldn't be any problem for me.

I can preach on issues of right and wrong and morality and stay away from politics because that's no place for the pulpit, not politics. I'm not going to have anything to do with politics. It wasn't long until I learned that was impossible.

[22 : 44] Unfortunately, some still haven't learned it. Question. How does each political party, Democrat and Republican, and I suppose we could throw in independence, but it's kind of hard to think of independence as a party because there are some people who are independent in their opinion in the Congress, but we don't consider the independence as a political party, so we just have to talk in terms of what we have, and that's Democrat and Republican.

How does each political party distinguish themselves before the voters? How does each party present themselves? How does each party want the people to think of them?

how do they decide which side of the issues they will be on? We know very often when issues come up for debate or for a final vote, there are so many pro, so many con.

Very often the vote is what we call along party lines. That means just about all the Republicans voted this way, and just about all the Democrats voted this way.

Sometimes there's a crossover, and sometimes we get what is known as a bipartisan vote, where a number of Democrats and a number of Republicans both vote for it.

[24 : 14] That doesn't happen nearly as often as it should, but how does a prospective candidate for office decide which political party he or she will identify with?

are you going to run for office on a Democratic ticket or a Republican ticket or as an independent and try to take votes from both of those?

How does each candidate formulate one's position so as to align oneself with one party or another? I probably should have talked to Jim Jordan about this and say, how did you arrive at your decision to be a Republican as opposed to being a Democrat?

Or you could talk to a Democrat representative and ask him, what was it that made you decide to be a Democrat and to run for office as a Democrat? Well, I'll just throw out a couple of possibilities.

Let's start here. Each one who presents himself as a candidate for office has certain values, norms, standards built into him, beginning with parental upbringing, educational background, societal influence, influence of political heroes from the past such as JFK, FDR, Ronald Reagan, a personal assessment of national and international realities and issues with all of the above filtered through one's personal grid of spiritual background.

[26 : 11] All of us are today what we have been becoming. And that's true of everyone in Congress and everyone who sits in the Oval Office and everyone who sits on the Supreme Court bench.

We are all a product of what we have been becoming. And into each of our lives, there is certain information and data and experiences poured.

And we are all receptacles of this. Some of it is good information, some of it is bad information, but we absorb all of that. And the bottom line is we formulate a grid, a kind of glasses, if you will, through which we see everything, the world and all about it.

and we assess on the basis of what we have become. We formulate positions and ideas as a result of study and consideration and being out among people and talking with people and attending things and having experiences, and all the while, the wheels are turning, and we're formulating positions.

and those are the basis on which we run. All of the above and more is derived from one's indoctrination.

[27 : 34] Now, that's not a bad word. It's related to the word doctrine, and all doctrine means is teaching. Doctrine is teaching. And when someone is indoctrinated, that means they have teaching of whatever kind it is, put into them.

They are indoctrinated. Parents begin doing that with their children at a very early age. Of course, they usually don't call it indoctrination because that sounds too nefarious.

They call it child training. Well, it's indoctrination. You are trying to get them to adhere to certain principles, ideas, beliefs, etc.

This is just normal. This is people. This is the way we are. This is the way parents care for children. And would to God we had more parents who felt that way instead of so many children who are neglected by their parents.

we are to the inculcation of information that is designed to promote a particular point of view.

[28 : 52] you are being indoctrinated right now as I speak. We are to reprove and we are to produce and we are to teach sound doctrine that is teaching and doctrine that is in accordance with what the scriptures reveal.

That's my job. that's what I'm supposed to do. Equip the saints and you do that through teaching through telling them things they need to know so they can build those things those truths into their moral fiber that will enable them to take positions regarding things and make right choices and right decisions for all of life.

This is living. We all do this. Some indoctrination is done involuntarily as in parent to child and issues of right and wrong.

It's an automatic indoctrination and it starts with two words no no no no and that's you know what that that's indoctrination you are teaching a child that a certain thing is prohibited and you want them to learn that so they will shy away from that for their own good and for their own safety.

So indoctrination can be a good thing it can be an evil thing too but it can be a good thing especially as it comes from parent to child.

[30 : 25] Indoctrination is designed to affect one's attitude regarding the doctrine being proposed with the intent of the indoctrinated one acting upon that doctrine by carrying it out with action.

This is taking place right before our very eyes on thousands of computer screens across the world. When Muslim sympathizers who are radical in their attitude look at these things online and are recruited by these people online to strap bombs to themselves and kill people that's all

indoctrination.

we call it radicalizing. It is teaching. It is communicating concepts and ideas to people with the intent that they will act on them and carry them out.

and that's precisely what's taking place right now all over. We are all indoctrinated with multiple issues, causes, and effects.

Christians, Jews, Muslims, atheists, all have and are undergoing indoctrination. I remember the most extreme form of indoctrination in my lifetime long before many of you ever came along.

[31 : 57] It was so radical and so evil, it was given a special name. It was a word that didn't even occur in the dictionary before that. It was called brainwashing.

You ever hear that? It started with the North Koreans and the Chinese communists during the North Korean War, when American soldiers who were captured and taken prisoners, by the North Koreans, were put in prison camps, and they were forced to undergo indoctrination that was designed to philosophically and emotionally turn them against the United States of America, for whom they were there fighting and representing, and win them over to the communist cause, all through mind manipulation, and they were very good at it.

And I remember how scandalous it was because there were a number of American GIs who were captured by the North Koreans, Americans, and when they had an opportunity to gain their freedom and come back to America, the job of indoctrination and brainwashing was so thorough and so efficient, they chose to stay, and they turned their back on the United States of America, of which they were a citizen.

And you know what we called them? We called them turncoats. That was a pretty popular term back then in the 50s, and it was an embarrassment to the armed forces that these soldiers, GIs from Oklahoma, from Pittsburgh, from Texas, from Ohio, were so subjected to the mind control of these people that they actually turned their loyalty around, and the term brainwashing came into effect.

maybe some of you of my generation perhaps, saw the movie, The Manchurian Candidate, with Frank Sinatra, and by the way, he didn't sing a note, he was an actor, and the whole thing had to do with the successful brainwashing of an American GI to program him in such a way that he would come back to this United States and eventually assassinate the President of the United States all under mind control and as a lackey of the Communist government.

[34 : 41] And of course, this had some Hollywood stuff in it, and some of it was fanciful and wouldn't fly, a little far-fetched, but the principle was there, the whole idea of brainwashing. And somebody has pointed out that, you know, brainwashing and indoctrination, they're just different words for the same thing.

And the observation has been made, there's nothing at all wrong with brainwashing depending on the detergent that's used. And that really is the nub of the matter.

What do we wash brains with? Are they washed with truth and honesty and justice and responsibility and self-reliance? Or are they washed with get all that you can get, take advantage of whomever you can to get whatever you want and all the rest of it, the selfish credo?

Brains can be washed with that too, by example as well as by teaching. Talk today about what we need to do is capture the minds and hearts of the youth.

Essentially that means penetrate their thinking so you can get them to think the way you want them to think and do what you want them to do because the mind does the thinking and the heart puts it into action.

[35 : 55] Today, in many college and university classes young people are indoctrinated or brainwashed, take your choice, with atheism, evolution, Marxism, communism and taught even to have a disdain for our nation, its heritage, its flag and its role in the world.

And this is going on all over the country and yes, it's right next door at Ohio State University. There is always room for legitimate constructive criticism of our nation and there always will be because we are a flawed nation comprised of flawed people.

But that's not what these revisionists are about. They are about the rejection of patriotic and traditional moral values that has made this nation the envy of the world in so many ways.

And that's what's so evil about it. These professors, these professors are not secretive.

They are not secretive about their Marxist communist views but openly own them, espouse them and defend them.

[37 : 22] And they are everywhere. And it's taking a toll because these young minds are really impressed and captivated by many of these professors in positions of authority.

with advanced degrees. And they of course are generally looked upon as the smartest people in the world. You have to buy into what they're saying. And so many of these impressionable kids are.

So politics. Politics is what the people involved in it makes it. If there are people of good moral character with a sense of right and wrong who value virtues and eschew evil and wrongdoing, that will well serve the constituency whom they are governing.

But if there are people of low ethical character who are self-serving, only wanting to benefit themselves and use their office in ways never intended by those who put them there, then you have a corrupt office holder who does not serve the public well but seeks to take advantage of them. Nearly all large bodies of office holders contain some of each. And this is where we are in this country right now.

[38 : 50] Issues of truth, honesty, justice are often hard to come by. Let's think in terms of applying some of this.

Can I rightly say, by the way, I'm sure you would agree with me, is theft thievery?

Isn't that a moral issue? Of course it is. Can I rightly say, hey, I don't want to steal from people, but I don't have the right to tell other people not to steal?

That's a personal decision. Each must be free to decide from himself whether or not he wants to be a thief. Thievery should be left to the prerogative of the individual.

It's an individual right. Or are we going to be rigid and unyielding and hard nosed and say, no, it doesn't make any difference who you are.

[40 : 00] Thievery is wrong. It's unacceptable. It's immoral. It's against the law. You're not allowed to do that. And it doesn't make any difference if you feel that it's the right thing to do.

You're wrong. You're wrong. And we have a responsibility to tell them that they're wrong and without apology. How about this?

I would not agree for my wife to have an abortion. It's something I wouldn't do. but I don't have the right to tell others that they can't. And this is a very favorite ploy among a lot of people who are not even in favor of abortion.

But I wouldn't prevent anybody else from it's look I wouldn't take a gun and shoot somebody in cold blood.

but that doesn't give me the right to tell somebody else that they can't do that. That's crazy. That is just plain nuts.

[41 : 08] But it's this kind of thinking that's put us where we are. Now if you can't imagine the scenario with a gun and shooting somebody how about using an abortionist scalpel and taking the life of that baby.

before it exits the womb. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Abortion and thievery are both limited to the sphere of morality as long as all you are doing is talking about them. But the minute these issues are brought before a legislative body, local, state, or federal, you inevitably add to the moral issue a political component.

So which is it? Moral or political? It's both. And they are inseparable. So don't try to separate them. This is an inescapable dynamic no matter what form of government you have or what the name of your political party.

Political parties are what they are. They are about positions of perceived morality that a group decide upon.

[42 : 33] Each comes to a political party with certain preconceived positions or presuppositions as regards moral issues or what is right or what is wrong. Opposing political parties are in great agreement on many issues of morality.

All parties agree it's immoral to commit murder, rape, theft, and these all are absolutists. But wait a minute.

Again, what about the murder of the unborn? Or maybe that isn't murder. Well, what would you call it?

The intentional taking of the defenseless human life and denying it the right to life. What else can you call it?

I don't have another term. But you know, we are in a day and time like never before in our history where we insist on calling things other than what they are.

[44 : 05] It's called a part of political correctness. it's called euphemism. It's called toning it down. It's called refusing to be harsh. We need to call it what it is. And don't let the other side get away with denying it.

It is murder, plain, and simple. but it is unthinkable that a legal institution of the United States could legitimize murder?

That can't be! Yes, it can. And it is. Is abortion a moral issue?

Absolutely. What's the opposite of moral? It's immoral. Can you imagine these judges that voted on Roe v. Wade in the Supreme Court taking the position that now look, we know that this is a moral issue and we're going to come down on the side of immorality.

[45 : 30] We're going to impose an immoral decision abortion on the United States as regards the subject of abortion on demand.

Do you think they thought that way? That they felt that way? Of course not. And if any of them did, they certainly wouldn't have been it. they believed that what they were doing was a moral issue in favor of a woman's rights, completely ignoring the fact that they're sacrificing the rights of the victim. This is the kind of crazy thinking that is going on in our world. This is why I insist and I am so emphatic about this because the scriptures make it so clear that fallen man thinks, reasons, exercises, logic, and reaches decisions with a fallen mind, a corrupted thinking process. He has a skewed thinking apparatus that does not enable him to think in terms of sheer truth and honesty. his thinking is skewed.

It is a mess. That's part of the fall. All the rest of us has fallen too, not just our minds. All of us are fallen and we're fallen through and through. And the only corrective that is given to this moral human fallenness is that which is found in the word of God.

[47 : 01] God's word is designed to correct faulty human thinking. It gives us the real truth. This is why Jesus Christ could say to his disciples, the words that I speak unto you, they are truth and they are life.

Wow! That's an enormous statement for him to make. And we believe that it's fully backed up. The word of God provided as a revelation directly from God is a gift of God that is designed to offset and compensate for and counteract the loose screwball thinking that we mere mortals are capable of coming up with.

Same-sex marriage is just plain nuts. That's all you can say. It's just plain nuts. And it has nothing to do with allowing people whom they love to marry whom they love.

That's plain nuts also. but when you're in an age of moral relativism and all of this stuff comes up in the mix you get what we've got.

And the call has to be back to truth back to honesty back to virtue back to justice back to the Bible.

[48 : 29] That's where we need to go. Nothing else. Nothing else is going to save this nation. Got a few minutes and I'll entertain any comments or questions you have. And I don't know if I've made myself clear or not, but I can't.

If I've obfuscated the thing or muddied the waters anymore, tell me and I'll try to straighten it out. Any other comments or questions? In the back there.

Mike will be right there. Okay. Can we do a Bible study about what the Bible has to say about politics? I'm sorry. You know, I have to ask you, I've got my hearing aids in, my batteries just died as I left the office there.

Can we do a Bible study about what the Bible has to say about politics? Do a study as to what the Bible has to say about politics.

That would be interesting. Yeah, that would be very interesting. Maybe we could undertake that at the 9 o'clock hour. I don't want to interrupt the Jewish final solution to the world's problems any more than I already have.

[49 : 46] But that would be a good 9 o'clock and we've got this next Sunday taken care of with content. But what you suggest, that could be very interesting, what the Bible says about politics.

Because it does, well, it's got quite a bit to say. So, both Old Testament and New. And by the way, virtually every prophet, Old Testament and New, clashed with the established politics, both the religious politics and the secular politics.

people and virtually every one of them paid a very dear price for doing so because man does not like to be told he is evil.

And we saw that from John's Gospel, chapter 7, and I think verse 6 just last week, where Jesus told his brothers who had not yet believed on him that the world cannot hate you because you are of the world and you're just like the world.

But me, it hates. And the reason it hates me is because I tell it the truth about itself and it is evil and they don't like it.

[51 : 07] They never have. They never have. Jesus said to the Pharisees, which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?

and slay and abuse? Which of the prophets ever got away with speaking the truth to power? None of them, including Jesus Christ himself, because power does not appreciate being dragged into the light and shown for what it is.

And when you speak truth to power, you put yourself at peril. It's all through the Old Testament and all through the New Testament, but it is a price that needs to be paid.

It is someone else. Scott? Marv, would you say Eve was brainwashed? Well, I'm not real sure.

That might, I never thought of that. There's no question she was conned. No doubt about that. I don't know exactly what the lion, you know, he said, God knows that if you eat this, you will be as gods, knowing good and evil.

[52 : 27] I wouldn't be surprised if the serpent didn't throw in, and honey, it'll make you look slimmer, too. If he did, she might have bought it for sure.

Does this fig leaf make me look fat? Oh, wow. I tell you. Sometimes you have to laugh to keep from crying, don't you?

Anybody else? Okay. I would like your permission to put this subject to bed, at least for now.

And, you know, given what's going on in our culture and in our society, we may have to resurrect some things. I hope not. But, you know, the way things are going, quite frankly, it's pretty difficult to be real optimistic.

My optimism would flourish if there were a spiritual turnaround. I don't see any signs of that.

[53 : 32] I'm not saying that it can't happen. It's certainly a worthy subject for prayer because that would be and could be the salvation of the nation. And, frankly, I think, and, you know, from all of the polls that are taken, and I don't mean just a couple of polls that slant things.

I mean, from the polls in general that have been taken over the last four or five years, the consensus by a large majority, and I'm talking like 60 to 70 percent, is that the country is headed in the wrong direction.

And these are just average Americans in the way they feel as to the estimation they've given, headed in the wrong direction. And it's very difficult for me to disagree with that.

I see so many things that are so contrary to what this nation has been and has stood for. It's just things have just been turned on their head, and it's not for the better either.

Would you stand, please? Father, once again, we have to remind ourselves of who is really in charge, and we know that all of the things of which we have spoken are so much better known by you than they are by us.

[54 : 59] And we recognize that we all have our biases. We all have our preconceived ideas. We all have our own personal agendas as to what we think.

But we are really grateful that in the Word of God that you have provided for us, there is a path that can be taken that is the path of truth and honesty and justice and life and all that accompanies it.

And that's the path we want to take. We would that the rest of the world would come along with us, and we will do what we can and what you enable us to do to convince them that this is the way and they should walk in it.

We leave the results with you. Would you accept us placing ourselves at your disposal as an individual pastor and we trust as a congregation to be available to you and to America to be used in any way that you see fit to bring honor to yourself and to help restore this nation to what it can be and should be.

thank you for the presence of each one here this morning, and thank you for the privilege of addressing these issues to thinking, caring people.

[56 : 27] In Christ's name we pray. Amen.