

## IN A WORLD THAT IS HOSTILE TO TRUTH

October 7, 2018

Romans 13:1-14

For many, recent national news has brought immense frustration. It reports those who defended guilty men amid well-documented sex-abuse scandals in the past, rising now to condemn a man for sketchy, uncorroborated charges of alleged events thirty-six years ago. Named witnesses who discredit those allegations are ignored. Skeptics are denounced in moralizing lectures and profane shout-downs.

This selective outrage, undeterred by absence of evidence, seems to rise from other causes. One suspects it is fear that the new Supreme Court justice may rule against the abortion holocaust. Yet many in government applaud his opponents with sanctimony. A swath of citizenry reportedly embraces their cause. And the national news media, feigning objectivity, advocates for them.

Isaiah's lament resounds in our hearts: "judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter" (59:14). We may be tempted to think foolishly, as the disciples did when they said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" Christ's answer is the same today: "He turned, and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:54-56).

Amid the rage of godless masses, God's people must maintain a godly perspective. We must be governed by biblical truth.

### **1. God rules sovereignly over every nation, enthroning whom He will, setting up one while putting down another.**

"Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing." (Isaiah 40:15)

"For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Romans 9:17)

"Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut." (Isaiah 45:1)

### **2. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25)**

Imprisoned, Paul wrote, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing

that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:12-21)

### **3. Believers must submit themselves to the powers that rule over them.**

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” (Romans 13:1-4)

### **4. God’s people are to pray for their rulers, and their enemies. Sometimes they are one and the same.**

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. (I Timothy 2:1-3)

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matthew 5:44)

“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” (Acts 7:59, 60)

“O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?” (Psalm 94:1-4)

### **5. God’s people are reminded by such circumstances that their citizenship is in heaven.**

“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:22-24)

“For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 3:20).

“For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring

substance.” (Hebrews 10:43)