

What Is a Christian Nation? (Pt. 16)

Zechariah 4:6

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In two previous sermons (by way of review), you will recall that we have looked closely at the consequences of a Federal Constitution that requires Christians to own as the origin of authority within that nation, the people (“We the people of the United States of America” from the Preamble of the Constitution) rather than the Triune God of the Bible, that requires Christians to uphold and promote religious polytheism as the national religion of the land (in which all false religions are equally protected and promoted) rather than biblical Christianity in which the nation and its leaders officially and constitutionally “kiss the Son” (as an act of worship of Christ’s rightful lordship over the nation), and that requires Christians to acknowledge as the supreme law of the land, the Constitution, the laws, and the treaties of the land, rather than the universal and unchangeable Moral Law of God as found in Holy Scripture.

Specifically, we identified the following consequences for Christians in a nation where such an idolatrous and polytheistic Constitution is the official law of the land: (1) Christians cannot hold office or any position that would require them to swear to uphold such a Constitution that defends (and thereby promotes) every kind of false religion imaginable; (2) Christians cannot vote in elections (at the federal, state, or local levels) for candidates who will be required to swear to uphold such a Constitution that defends (and thereby promotes) idolatry, religious polytheism, and blasphemy of that which is most holy; and (3) Christians cannot serve in the military wherein they are required to swear to uphold a Constitution that intentionally fails to even mention the Triune God of the Bible, intentionally fails to profess submission to Jesus Christ (“the

prince of the kings of the earth” Revelation 1:5), and intentionally fails to acknowledge the Bible as the supreme law of the land, and who are furthermore required to join hands with the wicked in military covenants that involve the killing of others.

But this Lord’s Day we have one more consequence to consider for Christians whose country is ruled by an idolatrous, unbiblical Constitution: Christians cannot serve on a jury in judicial cases where they are required to swear to uphold in their rulings and judgments a Constitution that specifically defends (and thereby promotes) the lie that the people of the nation themselves are the origin and source of all authority within that land and that the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the land are to be the supreme law of the land.

The main points for the sermon this Lord’s Day are the following: (1) We as Christians Cannot Serve on Juries in Swearing to Deliberate and Rule By an Immoral Constitution as the Supreme Law of the Land (Isaiah 8:20); (2) Another Objection Considered and Answered.

I. We as Christians Cannot Serve on Juries in Swearing to Deliberate and Rule By an Immoral Constitution as the Supreme Law of the Land (Isaiah 8:20).

A. The following reasons are representative (not exhaustive) for why it is unlawful to serve on a jury in which one would be required to swear to uphold an idolatrous Constitution or would be required to rule according to an immoral Constitution as the supreme law of the land.

1. It is always unlawful to swear to uphold and defend the promotion of idolatry, false religion, heresy, blasphemy, and anything else that is sinful and immoral. If it is a grievous sin to practice idolatry, false religion, heresy, blasphemy, and any other violation of God’s Moral

Law (and it is as all of Scripture proves), then it is a gross aggravation of that sin to swear to defend (and therefore promote) the alleged right of people to practice idolatry, false religion, heresy, blasphemy, and any other violation of God's Moral Law. For in so doing we consent to their sin (Romans 1:32). As we have noted before, God's Moral Law expressly forbids swearing to do or to uphold that which is evil (Exodus 20:7; if swearing to do evil unintentionally is a sin according to Leviticus 5:4, how much more so when one does so with knowledge according to Isaiah 48:1). For example, if it is a grievous sin to practice sodomy, then it is a further aggravation of that sin to swear to uphold and defend the alleged right of one to practice sodomy. If it is a grievous sin to murder the unborn child, then it is a further aggravation of that sin to swear to uphold and defend the alleged right of one to murder the unborn child. And so likewise, if it is a grievous sin to practice idolatry, a false religion, heresy, or blasphemy, then it is a further aggravation of that sin to swear to uphold and defend the alleged right of one to practice these crimes of treason against the Most High God.

2. A second reason why it is unlawful to serve on a jury in which one would be required to swear to uphold and defend an idolatrous Constitution is that, it is an encouragement to others to likewise do what I have done in swearing to uphold and defend what is a sinful violation of God's Moral Law (Luke 17:1; Romans 14:21). When we swear to uphold and defend what is idolatrous, we in effect are saying to others, "Do as I have done. Follow my example." Dear ones, can you imagine the effect it would have in the Christian Church if ministers and elders refused to swear to uphold, defend, and promote idolatry, false religion, heresy, and blasphemy that is protected under the Constitution of the United States? That would cause many inside and outside the church to question why it is wrong to do so, and to inquire of themselves as to why they are doing so. Your example will either lead others into sin or lead others into the truth.

3. A third reason why it is unlawful to serve on a jury in which one would be required to swear to uphold and defend an idolatrous Constitution is that, it is to act, to speak, and to rule as though the wisdom of man (as found in the Constitution and laws of a nation) is of superior authority and of greater value than the wisdom of God (as found in the Holy Word of God). Should we ever submit our consciences to the laws of man as the supreme standard by which we rule? Dear ones, the Bereans were commended by the Holy Spirit as being not only noble, but “more noble” than those in Thessalonica because they judged the words of the apostles by the supreme standard of Scripture (Acts 17:11). But if we are summoned to serve on a jury, and we swear to rule in a case by the Constitution of the United States as “the supreme law of the land” in all such civil and judicial matters, we have not followed the example of the apostles, but have denied the example of the apostles in Acts 5:29 when they declared to the Sanhedrin, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Dear ones, God’s Moral Law is always the Supreme Law of the land, not a man-made Constitution.

4. Let us turn briefly to Isaiah 8:20. Here we find the alone infallible standard for our faith and practice (whether we find ourselves in the ecclesiastical realm or in the civil realm).

a. First, Isaiah writes to a religious people who have fallen away from the faith they once professed. The doctrines and commandments of God have been left behind for worship and instruction that is of man’s invention. Thus, Isaiah speaks God’s word to the people of Israel, “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples” (Isaiah 8:16). There is a sense in which prophecies may be said to be sealed when they are preserved and await fulfillment at God’s appointed time in the future (as in Daniel 12:4). But here, Isaiah does not command prophecy to be sealed but rather that God’s testimony be bound up and God’s law sealed. God’s testimony most likely refers to God’s wonderful acts in history, and God’s law most likely refers to God’s doctrine and

precepts taught in His Word. To bind up and to seal refer to acts of holding fast and preserving that which is revealed (whether in the Book of History or in the Book of Revelation). When God reveals His truth to us in history and in Scripture, we are not to let it slip from our firm grasp, but rather to bind it to ourselves and seal it in order that it not be lost, diluted, or compromised.

b. Second, note that Isaiah makes it clear that when we as Christ's disciples bind up His testimony and seal His law that we will be mocked, ridiculed, looked at as weird and strange ("Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of host, which dwelleth in mount Zion" Isaiah 8:18). Although Isaiah spoke of faithful disciples as being spiritual children whom the Lord had given to him, this ultimately points to all those given by God to Christ that He should save, forgive, justify, nourish and cherish as His own (Hebrews 2:13). Isaiah is here a type of Christ. But just as the faithful disciples of Isaiah (who were a few compared to the many who were backsliding in Judah and Israel) were appointed by God to be signs and wonders among the vast majority in Israel, so are the faithful disciples of Christ today appointed by God to be signs and wonders among the vast majority of those in the church and in the nation at the present time (Psalm 71:7; 1 Corinthians 11:18-19). Yes, refusing to be moved from those truths found in Holy Scripture will make us a "sign" and "wonder" to most within the nation today, and to many (sadly) within even the church today, but it is God Himself who makes us such a "sign" and "wonder". Let us not, therefore, be afraid or ashamed of our testimony for Christ and His truth revealed in His Holy Word.

c. Third, Isaiah warns his faithful disciples that some in Israel will come to them and tell them to look elsewhere for answers to matters of faith and practice ("And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto wizards, that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?" Isaiah 8:19). In Isaiah's

day, it was to necromancers that many were turning for answers (that is, to those who said they communicated with the dead to get their answers). However, dear ones, even if it is not to the dead that we go for our answers, if we go to the living and not to God and to His testimony and law as our infallible rule for faith and practice (but rather to the Constitution or the laws of a nation as the supreme law of the land), we might as well be seeking our answers from the dead. Ancient teachers and divines may be helpful, ancient councils and creeds may be useful, the constitutions and laws of nations may even at times be helpful and well stated, but it is always “to the law and the testimony” of God in which we are to rest with unshakeable trust and confidence as our supreme standard and law, whether in the church or in the nation (according to Isaiah 8:20). For if the dead or the living speak not according to this infallible rule of faith and practice, “there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). The light is not to be found in the laws of men, but rather in the Moral Law of God. And any light that might be found in the laws of men is there only because the laws of men reflect the justice of God’s Moral Law as the supreme standard. When we ground our supreme trust and confidence for what we believe and practice in people (living or dead), in antiquity, in the majority, in the Constitution, in the sincerity of those who have spoken, or any other created thing, we will be misled, deceived and deluded. Furthermore and more importantly, we will deny the supreme authority of the Triune God of the Bible who has spoken with unmatched authority in the inspired Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

B. Although it is always a grievous sin to swear to uphold and defend a Constitution that protects and promotes the alleged rights of those who practice what is contrary to the Moral Law of God as revealed in Scripture, I submit that it would be possible to serve on a jury, if the judge (and respective attorneys) stated that a Christian need not take an

oath to uphold and defend the Constitution and laws of the nation as “the supreme law of the land”, and declared that a Christian rule according to the Word of God as the supreme law by which to judge all matters and cases brought before him, rather than by the Constitution or the laws of the land. To date, a number of us Covenanters have been summoned to serve on juries, and have borne testimony to the Scripture as being the supreme law by which we must deliberate and rule (rather than the Constitution), and to date none of us have been selected by judges to sit on juries with that faithful testimony upon our lips (which is a very sad commentary as to the alleged “justice” that one will find in the courts of the land, which is so often a perverted sense of justice or a betrayal of God’s justice).

II. Another Objection Considered and Answered.

A. This objection to the biblical definition of a Christian nation may be stated as follows: “If Christians cannot serve in any official positions as those who may change the wicked laws of this nation (due to the unlawful oath to uphold and defend the Constitution), and if Christians cannot vote to put other Christians into official positions as their representatives to change wicked laws of this nation (due to the unlawful oath to uphold and defend the Constitution), and if Christians cannot serve in the military (due to the unlawful oath to uphold and defend the Constitution), and if Christians cannot serve on juries to use their influence in judicial matters (due to the unlawful oath to uphold and defend the Constitution), then how is reformation within a nation ever to be accomplished?” Since as Christians we are not allowed to pick the lesser of two evils as a lawful way to proceed in any act or decision we may make (for we cannot do evil that good may come according to the Holy Spirit in Romans 3:8), we can be absolutely certain that God will never condone or approve of a Christian swearing to uphold and defend

the alleged right of anyone to practice idolatry, a false religion, heresy, blasphemy or any other sin, or voting to put a representative in a position wherein he will be required to swear to do the same. However, God's answer to this objection is indeed found in His Holy Word.

B. The truths found in our text for this Lord's Day (from Zechariah 4:6) alone give to us the basis for a true, biblical reformation within a nation.

1. Let us first consider the historical context in which these inspired words occur.

a. A remnant of God's people had returned from 70 years of captivity to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem in about 538 b.c. under the capable leadership of Zerubbabel, the royal governor, and Joshua, the high priest. From the Book of Ezra, we learn that just as the foundation of the temple was completed, various means of opposition to completing the work of the temple were faced.

(1) The first obstacle the Jews faced is found in the prophecy of Haggai wherein the prophet Haggai identifies a number of those among the Jews who had returned from captivity as being more interested in building their own homes than they were in completing God's house and God's ministry. A general apathy was settling over the eyes and minds of the people to such a degree that they had lost sight of their chief mission: to build and complete the house of God. Where there is such an apathy among God's people, the work of the ministry and building the kingdom of Christ will surely suffer a great loss.

(2) The second obstacle the Jews faced was the opposition of those like Sanballat and Tobiah, who outwardly professed to be among the faithful (and expressed their desire to join hands in rebuilding the temple), but by their deeds manifested that they were traitors to the covenanted reformation promoted by God's faithful ministers.

(3) The third obstacle that confronted the Jews who promoted a covenanted reformation and sought to reestablish a covenanted uniformity in doctrine, worship, and government among the people of Israel was that of the king of Persia, who authorized the cessation of a rebuilt temple. There the foundation of the temple lay for approximately 16 years with no further progress due to the impasse brought by a civil magistrate. There was no recourse for the people of God by way of changing or altering their present circumstances. They couldn't vote the king out of power (the Jews had no right of voting). They couldn't influence other legislators to enact new laws (the word of the king was supreme). God's people had neither the military might nor the resources to overcome the king of Persia. What were God's people to do? Their hands seemed to be tied. How would they ever see the covenanted reformation of church and state within Israel advanced with the king of Persia standing in the way? With no human recourse left to them, was the covenanted reformation of church and state a mere dream that would never be realized?

b. The Word of God is given to Zechariah the prophet to deliver to the Jews at that time and likewise to us at this time. What is that word given by the Holy Spirit to Zechariah the prophet?

(1) First, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

(a) Dear ones, the Lord reminds His people that the work of a covenanted reformation is ultimately not by might nor by power (i.e. it is not accomplished ultimately by mere human resources such as civil leaders, voting, military prowess, or juries). Although the Lord uses appointed means to accomplish His will on earth (such as faithful magistrates and ministers), He is in no wise bound to work according to human means and resources (consider how the Lord brought victory to Gideon and his 300 men in defeating 125,000 Midianites by means of a trumpet, a lamp, and a pitcher), nor will He ever

call us to use means or resources that are wicked and evil in accomplishing His covenanted reformation (i.e. He will never call us to do evil that good may come by way of swearing to uphold and defend an idolatrous Constitution that grants an alleged right of people to violate the Moral Law of God). Thinking a covenanted reformation can only be won by the sheer number of Christian voters is looking to the might and power of man rather than to the might and power of God.

(b) The Lord not only reminds His people what they must not (with a misplaced faith) rely upon (namely, human resources to promote a covenanted reformation), but also gives His people a wonderful promise upon which they are to rely: “but by my spirit saith the LORD of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6). Don’t rely upon human resources (like magistrates, military might, sheer numbers of voters, and juries), rather let your trust and confidence be always in the Almighty Spirit of God to bring about a covenanted reformation at His own time and by the means that He appoints in His Holy Word (like the preaching and teaching of His Word, the writing and publishing of reformation truths, the faithful instruction of families, personal sanctification, and faithfully appealing in prayer to the promises of God). Dear ones, the promise is not to trust in means, but rather to trust in the Lord God Himself. Has the Lord promised a covenanted reformation among all the nations of the world (including Israel)? Yes, He has (as in Psalm 72:11; Isaiah 2:2; Isaiah 19:18-25; Zechariah 2:11). Then “the LORD of hosts” (or armies) will surely fight for His own cause and bring it to pass. The Lord may use instruments and means to accomplish His covenanted reformation, but never forget that the battle is His, and we must always uphold His cause in righteousness and truth (not by choosing between the lesser of two evils so that good may come from our evil choices).

(2) There is a second word given by the Holy Spirit to Zechariah the prophet in Zechariah 4:7: “Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall

bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Here the Lord addresses the mightiest king on the earth at that time, the king of Persia. He is the mountain that is mentioned here. However, the Lord will level that mighty mountain into a plain by removing him out of the way as an obstacle, and in fact, will make him a means of promoting the covenanted reformation (and without a single vote from the Jewish people) as we see in Ezra 6:1-12. Likewise consider the reformation of the great city of Nineveh, not by means of voting, but by means of the faithful preaching of God's Word. Zerubbabel, dear ones, is a type of Christ (in the very lineage of Christ according to Matthew 1:12), and it is the greater Zerubbabel that shall bring forth the headstone to His church in building His church and bringing the nations into His church ("I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" Matthew 16:18). This future covenanted reformation will not be based upon the works or merit of man, but entirely upon the grace of God and righteousness of Christ in powerfully saving sinners by the gospel of Jesus Christ: "Grace, grace to it" (Zechariah 4:7). God's people will be made willing to do Christ's good pleasure in the day of His power (Psalm 110:3; Philippians 2:13).

(3) And it is for that very reason that we are encouraged in Zechariah 4:10 not to despair of the Lord's promise to bring about a covenanted reformation (as did Sarah who laughed at the promise that she would bear a son in her old age), nor to resort to unbiblical and fleshly means to bring about the promise of a covenanted reformation (as did Abraham who sinned in taking Hagar to be his wife and in bringing forth a seed of the flesh rather than the seed of promise). To the contrary, dear ones, the Word of the Lord to you is this: "For who hath despised the day of small things?" (in Zechariah 4:10). I may despise the day of small things in regard to a covenanted reformation of church and state within this nation and all of the nations of the world. You may despise the day of small things. Most Christians may despise the day of

small things. The civil magistrates of this nation may despise the day of small things. But certainly God will NOT despise the day of small thing in regard to His promise of a covenanted reformation of church and state in all of the nations of the world. Remember the words of Jonathan, the godly son of King Saul of Israel: “For there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few” (1 Samuel 14:6). Dear ones, in what or in whom is your trust to bring about the promise of a covenanted reformation in church and state in this land which we love and for which we earnestly pray? Is your confidence in civil leaders, in voting, in political parties, in the military, or in courts of law and juries? If so, your confidence is sinfully misplaced. For it is “not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the LORD of hosts.” Amen.

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