

September 27, 2020

The Gospel of Jesus Christ!

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

All Scripture ESV unless otherwise noted!

1. God is...

Righteous, Holy, and Just

Psalm 7:11 God is a righteous judge, and a God who feels indignation every day.

Isaiah 1:4 Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged.

Zephaniah 3:5 The Lord within her is righteous; he does no injustice; every morning he shows forth his justice; each dawn he does not fail; but the unjust knows no shame.

Romans 2:5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

2. Man is/was...

Spiritually dead, Weak, A sinner, God's enemy

Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins.

Romans 5:6-11 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person— though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in

that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

3. Jesus has...

Lived, Bled, Died and was Resurrected

Romans 5:6-8 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

4. God has...

A plan and is carrying it out!

Genesis 12:1-3 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Jonah 2:9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

Jeremiah 31:31-33 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house

of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Ezekiel 36:24-27 I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

John 3:1-8 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it

wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

5. What must we do?

Repent and be Baptized

Mark 1:15 And saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Philippians 2:13 For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

God makes dead men alive

He draws them unto Him

He makes them able to believe, repent and be converted

He encourages followers to be baptized

He leads them to embrace the life long process of pursuing Jesus and living for Him

He leads them to grow in their love for and knowledge of the Lord

Isaiah 45:22-23 "Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

23 By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return:

'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'

Supreme Court Vacancy Pours Rocket Fuel on 2020 Election, September 21, 2020, By Tony Perkins

Just when many thought the stakes of the 2020 election couldn't get any higher, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away after a long battle with cancer, leading to an immediate opening on the nation's highest court.

The political implications of this are as important in the near term as the judicial philosophy of whoever fills it will be in the long term. It's not lost on many that President Trump was propelled to victory in 2016 by conservatives and evangelicals who seized on the importance his publicly-released list of potential Supreme Court nominees to fill Justice Scalia's vacant seat. Now, two Supreme Court justices, many lower federal court confirmations, and a number of key rulings later, Trump's legacy in the courts is almost already confirmed. On top of all this, the seat occupied by the court's arch-liberal just opened up -- paving the way for President Trump to make judicial nominations a bigger issue in 2020 than in 2016.

The constitutional and legal implications, and the stakes for the court's judicial philosophy and impact on the many landmark cases it will decide in the coming years, have only increased. Roe v. Wade is obviously on the minds of many, and a pro-life movement committed to its abolition is as close now as it has ever been. Add to this the impending religious liberty threats by those who want to use the levers of government power to punish Americans holding beliefs about marriage and sexuality out of date with "elite" opinion, and the attacks on a host

of other constitutional rights like gun rights and free speech -- it's no wonder that the court is so important to conservatives.

Many in the media will lament the politicization of the Supreme Court. I agree with them. But the court has been politicized not by social conservatives, but by activist judges and justices who lack an originalist approach and for 50 years have issued expansive policy-making rulings, taking power out of the hands of legislatures, and disenfranchising the voters behind them. Without the last five decades of Supreme Court activism, judicial nominations wouldn't be that big of a deal politically. It's that simple.

When Americans see their voices and their elected leaders' policies sidelined by activist judges, whether on immigration, affirmative action, or other issues -- their political interest in the court only increases, and the stakes in the voting booth only get higher.

The impact the court's decisions have on our country in these cases alone would be sufficient reason for President Trump to immediately nominate a solid originalist to fill the vacancy that is now on the court. But there is further reason to do so at this unique moment in history.

The court will likely play a key role in any litigation or other legal disputes over the 2020 presidential election. As the nation is on edge, having a sufficient number of justices on the court to avoid a deadlock on key legal issues will be important.

For all these reasons, President Trump should immediately nominate a solid originalist, with sufficient

backbone and character to withstand the likely withering criticism that will be thrown their way, both in the confirmation process and when they are on the court. We know it is coming soon, from the same purveyors of "elite" opinion who look at the court to do their bidding on social policy. We should simply disregard it, and Leader McConnell should swiftly advance the president's nominee to a floor vote in the Senate.

One note of caution as we consider a nominee: social conservatives have been told to "trust us" when supposedly originalist nominees have been put forth before. Yet as Chief Justice Roberts slides toward the liberal wing of the court, and Justice Gorsuch botched the supposedly textualist ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton County* earlier this year (which will have religious liberty implications for years to come), we can no longer afford to merely "trust" anyone on Ginsburg's open seat. Some constitutional rights hang by a thread, and the lives of the unborn matter too much and our religious freedom is too dear to us to simply trust. We must fill this seat with a nominee who we are assured has a backbone and will deliver an unimpeachably originalist record on the high court.

The Constitution provides for a Supreme Court nominee and their confirmation. Conservatives rightly demand it. And as we head into this election, our nation needs it.

Joseph Bondarenko was born in 1936 in the Ukraine, the son of a pastor. In 1955, he was miraculously admitted to the Institute of Marine Engineers [Naval Academy] since he was not a member of the Komsomol [All-Union Leninist Young Communist League].

At the Institute, he was threatened by the Young Communist League and even the KGB. In his own words: "Then I was called to the office of the rector of the Institute, who gave me an ultimatum: 'God or diploma - choose!' God gave me strength and courage, and I made my choice. I said: 'Serving God and my neighbor is the meaning and purpose of my life. I cannot deny Him who gave His life for me. I cannot deny God for the sake of the diploma.' So, after six years of study, I was expelled from the institute for my work among young people and for promoting faith in God."¹

After his expulsion from the Naval Academy, Christian disciple Bondarenko would go on to serve three stints in Soviet prison camps for his faith in Jesus Christ. Imprisoned for nearly a decade in inhuman, godless Gulag conditions, he was far away from his wife and children. Here, in the Gulag, the minister, author, theologian, and public speaker became known as the "Billy Graham of Russia."²

The now 83-yr-old pastor spoke at Godspeak Calvary Chapel in Thousand Oaks, CA, last Sunday. As if having a déjà vu, he said, "Everything that's happening today [in America] is almost like a movie I have already watched."³

"I see a lot of parallels between the Soviet regime and things happening now because there was a time in history where they [the communists] closed churches completely, then they would reopen a little bit, and if the church was open there were certain 'guidelines' given to pastors.

"Don't they realize what is happening now in America is exactly what happened to us in communist Russia? It started with 'Don't gather. Don't sing. Spread apart. Listen to the government.' Then it quickly turned into full-on persecution and the church did not wake up in time. I am here to beg you to call the church to wake up, stand firm, conquer!"⁴

"The system was more merciful towards murderers, pedophiles, and criminals than to Christians.

"First they took away freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, and [imposed] a very strict censorship and control of all media."

America is beginning to resemble the Soviet Union with its slanted and prejudiced news media mirroring the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic's news organs Pravda and Izvestia, and with Big Tech's censorship of free speech, government intrusion into religious liberty and the ostracization of the constitutional rights of freedom of religion and assembly.

"Private schools and homeschooling were completely forbidden," Bondarenko continued, "because the government was overseeing education of all people and all ages."

With that in mind, Evangelical and Pro Life Catholic Christians will understand that if they do not regain control of the wellsprings of liberty that are propelling the culture, sustainable freedom and liberty for our children and grandchildren is far from certain.

American Christendom has gotten itself in a terrible state over the last 100 years. Its anemic presence in the marketplace shows in its lack of power, vigor, and vitality. By abandoning the public square, American Christendom has failed to realize that everyone, not just some, will suffer from the violent secular commotion against God's set boundaries of righteousness. Look at where secular government has extended its protections, and piety:

- Engel v. Vitale in 1962 - removal of prayer to Jehovah God in public education.
- Abington School District v. Schempp in 1963 - removal of the Bible from public schools.
- Roe v. Wade in 1973 - slaying of unborn children.
- Stone v. Graham in 1980 - removal of the Ten Commandments from public school walls.
- Obergefell v. Hodges in 2015 - legalization of the sin of homosexuality and homosexual marriage.
- Bostock v. Clayton County in 2020 - expansion of homosexual and transgender rights.

Although false, secularism is a religion, and although producing distress and misery, it has borne much fruit since it emerged in the late 19th century. Its tempestuous Marxist trampling of America's once Christian institutions, public schools and universities is now part and parcel of the culture. There is much that needs reversal and renewal if America is to survive.

"This is not decay, this is organized destruction," said U.S. Attorney General William Barr recently of secularism. "Secular forces and their allies have marshaled all the forces of mass communication, popular culture, the entertainment industry, and academia, in an unremitting assault on religion and traditional values."

We praise General Barr for his moral stance, elucidating on the battle between the two principalities - Christianity vs Secularism - vying for ideological supremacy and control of resources in the public square.

Which brings us to Pastor Ken Graves of Bangor, Maine.

Bethany Blankley reports that "Calvary Chapel of Bangor Maine has resumed holding indoor services while also practicing social distancing and following sanitizing guidelines, despite threats of criminal charges, fines and imprisonment [from Maine Governor Janet Mills]."

Pastor Graves is head of the board of directors for the American Renewal Project and as such we celebrate his Gideon stand in the public square and lawsuit against Maine's despotic Governor Mills.

"The same scrutiny as being mandated for houses of worship," argues Pastor Graves, "is not being imposed upon 'essential' commercial and non-religious entities, including liquor stores, marijuana dispensaries, warehouse clubs, and big box stores.

"The governor initially prohibited all religious gatherings, including holding services in parking lots. The initial order stipulated that violators would face criminal penalties of up to 6 months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

"After Liberty Counsel sued, the governor said at some point in the future she would allow 'very limited worship', but only after churches that applied with the state to reopen were approved to reopen and displayed a badge on the outside of the building signifying it had the state's approval to be open."⁵

Remember the Soviet-style guidelines, pastor Bondarenko spoke off.

While all deaths are tragic, COVID-19 deaths in Maine represent 0.001% of a population of 1.34 million.

God had great purpose in the founding of America, where in 1607 America's founders at Jamestown debarked, erected a cross, knelt, received communion, and pledged: "We do hereby Dedicate this Land, and ourselves, to reach the People within these shores with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to raise up Godly generations after us, and with these generations take the Kingdom of God to all the earth. May this Covenant of Dedication remain to all generations, as long as this earth remains, and may this Land...be Evangelist to the World. May all who see this Cross, remember what we have

done here, and may those who come here to inhabit join us in this Covenant ..."

While contemporary America has drifted far from its founders' mission statement, the present days of adversity and the flame and crucible of trial and tribulation are reshaping a people called by His name. With that said, let us not make the mistake of going right back to "normal" after the hard times have come to an end. We must keep building on Jesus' Kingdom ekklesia assignment put forth in Matthew 16:18.

A.W. Pink's spiritual insight into what is required to secure God's everlasting order demands rehabilitation of American Christendom in order to reestablish the biblically based culture bequeathed to us by America's founders: "It would indeed be strange if we apprehended how that on the one hand Canaan was a free gift unto Israel, which they entered by grace alone; and on the other that they had to fight for every inch of it!"

God declares nowhere that He will preserve imprudence and presumption, in light of the butts, budgets and buildings model adopted by the Church over the last century, including abandonment of the public square.

A.W. Pink's words make clear just how muddled and nonplussed the 21st-century Church has become: "Nowhere in the Epistles is there a single exhortation for the saints as such to engage in public evangelism, nor even to do 'personal work' and seek to be 'soul winners'. Rather are they required to 'witness for Christ' by their daily conduct in business and in the home. They are to 'show forth' God's praises, rather than tell them forth.

They are to let their light shine. The testimony of the life is far more effectual than glib utterances of the lips. Actions speak louder than words."

God be praised that Gideons and Rahabs are entering the public square.

David Lane

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Bishop E.W. Jackson, President of S-T-A-N-D (Staying True to America's National Destiny)

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has died. I am sure that family and friends already miss her. We pray for them in their time of grief. While I did not share her values or her jurisprudential philosophy, she was apparently a good friend and person of decency toward those who knew her. She was also a pioneering American woman. I would never have appointed her to the Supreme Court, but her life and career proves that in our wonderful country, any individual of any race, male or female, by dint of talent, hard work and determination can succeed and make an impact. She is to be congratulated for that. While I cannot celebrate with those who shared her ideology, she has certainly left those who agreed with her plenty to celebrate. On a strictly judicial note, her replacement should be someone who reveres the American Constitution. She did not. The next Justice should be someone who holds to the text and original intent of the Founders who passed it. She did not. The next Justice should be someone who does not view the Supreme Court as an instrument of social and cultural transformation which can be created by the stroke of a pen by a small group of elites acting more like philosopher kings than judges. Justice Ginsberg failed that test markedly. While I have compassion and even some admiration for her as a human being, I will not join the hypocrisy parade of praising her judicial legacy. In my view, it is not a good one, and we would be better off as a country to undo much of it.