

**EDGEMONT BIBLE CHURCH - PASTOR DOUG WHITE**  
**BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE COMMITTED BELIEVER**  
**FALL/WINTER 2011 – SPRING/2012**  
**“LIVING AS JESUS’ SPECIAL PEOPLE”**

**“LOVING ONE ANOTHER IN THE LIGHT OF  
POLITICAL DIFFERENCES”**

**Reminders from past lessons on brothers having differing opinions on matters of practice:**

**GUIDELINES TO LOVING ONE ANOTHER  
WHEN WE DIFFER FROM  
ROMANS 14**

**GUIDELINE 1:** *Recognize that some of our brothers have, for a variety of reasons, placed on themselves certain restrictions or disciplines based on personal preferences. The brethren are not to enter into disputes or arguments about these things. The brother with such a restriction is known in Romans 14:1 as one who is “weak in the faith”. Though his thoughts may differ, he is still a brother in Christ and is to be treated with respect and love as a brother. Because he has placed so much value on his preference he must live by it until God gives him a free conscience in it. Due to his willfulness in regard to this restriction or belief, God may never be able to give him liberty from it. When his restriction becomes an issue of changing the gospel from grace to works, it is then a doctrinal problem and must graciously be rebuked.*

**PREFERENCE:** *A personal choice lacking adequate biblical support to have absolute value which a person holds in varying degrees of tenacity. Its lack of biblical support means that it cannot be accepted universally by the church of Jesus Christ in all areas of the world. Its lack of biblical support is why it is called in Romans 14:1 “doubtful things.” It does not become a problem until it enters the corporate life of the church. The brother with the personal preference is not permitted to force his preference on others just as the others are not permitted to cause him to violate his conscience by making him do it.*

**GUIDELINE 2:** *Do not despise the brother for having the restriction on his life nor the other for not having it.*

**GUIDELINE 3:** *Do not judge him (as in condemning him) since, as a brother, God has already received him.*

**GUIDELINE 4:** *He answers to God and not to you. He is God’s servant, not yours. He will either stand or fall before his Master. God is able to make him stand; that is not your responsibility*

**GUIDELINE 5:** *A brother on either side of the issue must be fully convinced in his mind that the action he is taking or not taking is pleasing to God. Since God is pleased with faith, the action taken must be done with faith.*

**GUIDELINE 6:** *Whatever you do, do it with thanksgiving to God and receive the brother as one who is giving thanks to God as he practices his restriction.*

**GUIDELINE 7:** *Let God be his judge as He is yours; he is living unto God just as you are. He will give an account of himself and his actions at the Judgment Seat of Christ just as you will.*

**GUIDELINE 8:** *Do not put a stumbling-block in your brother's path that would cause him to "stumble" in his walk with God. Don't tempt him, ridicule him, or badger him into violating his conscience; don't flaunt your liberty before him, especially in an attempt to demean him, shame him or irritate him. On the other hand, the weaker brother is not to force the other brothers to have to live to please him if they are to have fellowship with him.*

**GUIDELINE 9:** *Do not destroy with your liberty what the weaker brother cannot tolerate. Love him as Christ has loved you. Do not put him in a position that the good the one practices will be spoken of by him as evil because of a proud attitude.*

**GUIDELINE 10:** *Pursue things that will make for peace with the brothers.\**

**GUIDELINE 11:** *Pursue things by which you can edify and build up the brothers.*

**GUIDELINE 12:** *Do not destroy with your selfish preferences what God has done in saving us by grace through faith.*

**GUIDELINE 13:** *Even though all things are pure, you are not obligated to do all things. You will not destroy your faith or your salvation if you do not practice something for the sake of not destroying a brother.*

**GUIDELINE 14:** *Whatever you are going to allow, do or not do, you must do it by faith. Whatever is not of faith is sin. If in doubt, don't.*

## **I. THE UNIQUENESS IN HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**A. The evolutionary development of a governmental philosophy**

**B. The concept of a nation ruled by law and not merely by strong personalities following the pattern of the law/covenant of God with Israel**

**C. The election of leaders rather than an ancestral inheritance**

**D. Generally smooth transition of leadership and authority from one elected group to the next**

## **II. GOD'S WARNING TO ISRAEL ABOUT KINGS AND CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT**

**A. Early warnings BEFORE they entered the promised lan**

*De 17:14 "When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,' 15 "you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. 16 "But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17 "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. 18 "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this*

law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. 19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 "that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel. (NKJV)

**B. Samuel's warning when the people demanded a king over them**

1Sa 8:6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD.

7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

8 "According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day-with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods-so they are doing to you also.

9 "Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them." 10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king. 11 And he said, "**This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. 12 "He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. 13 "He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. 14 "And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. 15 "He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. 16 "And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. 17 "He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. 18 "And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day."**

19 Nevertheless the people **refused to obey** the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." 21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. 22 So the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king." And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city." (NKJV)

### **C. Why Israel wanted a king over them**

- 1. Lack of internal controls (self-government); it is too hard to live by the law. They always drifted to every man doing what was right in his own eyes.**
- 2. The failure to retain godly men in the role of priests; priests are sinners too. Eli and his sons; Samuel and his sons**
- 3. The desire to**
  - a. “be like the other nations”** With this they rejected their “exceptionalism” as a nation formed by God. This led to their rejection of the covenant they had all agreed to for living in the promised land under the mighty hand of God.
  - b. “have a king judge them (deliver them from enemies)”** With this they rejected God and God’s law from leading them, opening them to the leadership of the ungodly as well as the godly. Judgment with this system left justice in the hands of the arbitrary prejudice of the king
  - c. “have a king to act as a law enforcement and military force to both defend and extend the kingdom”** With this they rejected God’s unseen protection of them for the seen power of their armies and military might. This allowed them to have the illusion of being strong when they were actually vulnerable. It was a method for comparing themselves to other nations. It often gave them a false sense of security and fooled them into many alliances with the ungodly.

### **D. The direct relationship of the actions of people and their government (All verses in NKJV)**

*Pr 28:2 Because of the transgression of a land, many are its princes; But by a man of understanding and knowledge Right will be prolonged.*

*Pr 28:12 ¶ When the righteous rejoice, there is great glory; But when the wicked arise, men hide themselves.*

*Pr 28:28 ¶ When the wicked arise, men hide themselves; But when they perish, the righteous increase.*

*Pr 29:2 ¶ When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.*

*Pr 29:16 ¶ When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; But the righteous will see their fall.*

*Pr 11:10 ¶ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.*

*Pr 15:29 ¶ The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.*

*Pr 16:13 ¶ Righteous lips are the delight of kings, And they love him who speaks what is right.*

*Pr 17:26 ¶ Also, to punish the righteous is not good, Nor to strike princes for their uprightness.*

*Pr 18:5 ¶ It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, Or to overthrow the righteous in judgment.*

### **III. THE UNITED STATES AND MOSAIC-COVENANT ISRAEL HAVE SOME THINGS IN COMMON**

- A. Both would have a covenantal law that bound them to one another as the final authority. Israel and the Torah; the US and the Constitution**
- B. The Constitution of the United States is a covenantal agreement between the governing and the governed, between one another and between the states and the government they formed in union with one another, the federal government**
- C. Both had human mediators who were set to defend that union and its limits between themselves and the people being governed.**
- D. Both had a system of judging infractions of the common, covenantal law. Israel had elders; US has courts**

### **IV. WHAT GOD LOOKS FOR IN A LEADER FOR THE POLITICAL GOVERNING OF A NATION**

#### **A. The leader's relationship to the covenantal law**

*De 17:18 "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. 19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 "that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel. (NKJV)*

*Ex 18:17 So Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you do is not good. 18 "Both you and these people who are with you will surely wear yourselves out. For this thing is too much for you; you are not able to perform it by yourself. 19 "Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: **Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. 20 "And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.** (NKJV)*

#### **B. The character of the leader**

*Ex 18:21 "Moreover you shall **select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness;** and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. 22 "And let them judge the people at all times. Then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge. So it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you. 23 "If you do this thing, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people will also go to their place in peace." (NKJV)*

## **V. WHAT GOD EXPECTS US TO LOOK FOR IN LEADERS TO LEAD US**

- A. If our faith rests in a “king” to “judge” us then God will not hear us when we cry out to Him. If the leader does what is prophesied of him by the LORD then we will want delivery!**  
*1Sa 8:18 "And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day." (NKJV)*
- B. Regardless of the one selected (or ones selected) our trust is to be in God alone and we are to be in continuous prayer for him**  
*1Ti 2:1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. (NKJV)*
- C. Look for “able men”:** Men who have proven themselves leaders to get things done, with a good reputation among the people for doing so with integrity, and with good skills at negotiating and seeing the big picture
- D. Look for men who “fear God”.** He does not have to be a member of our particular commitment to the faith but he does need to be one who knows and understands fully that he will give an account of himself to God. He must be an accountable man.
- E. Look for “men of truth”.** In the same way that the elders of Israel were to be men who were faithful to the covenant they had made with God, the man who leads in any governing capacity is to be a man who is faithful to the covenant of this country, found in our history of the founding, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. He must be a man who speaks and lives the truth. But once again, make sure you do not have too much confidence in fallible people. They are sinners and can make statements or actions they should not have.
- F. Look for men who “hate covetousness”.** Bribes and power pervert justice. “Follow the money” as the colloquial proverb says. The borrower is servant to the lender. In the world of politics it is easy to become perverted by the people who want their own way to be done. Look for men who have not been bought by special interests.
- G. Look for men who will give the greatest freedom possible to “live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”**  
*1 Tim 2:2 or in keeping with the documents of the covenant America has made with one another, one who will protect the “inalienable rights endowed by the Creator” including “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”*
- H. As is the natural activity of man, people will differ and are often willing to make allowances for or even overlook the character flaw in one area of a candidate’s life to have a the protection of some personal area for themselves. This is a flaw in our human system that can only be blocked by the fear of the Lord and submission to His word.**
- I. Avoid arguments with brothers over such things for they produce nothing but strife and bring no glory to the Lord. Learn to**

***present your position from a biblical viewpoint. If there is none then you should reconsider its value!***

***J. Bear in mind the big picture of what God is doing with the nations and why. No one is going to bring the kingdom of God on earth without the King of kings Himself being here to do it personally.***

***K. Live at peace and look for the coming of the Lord. Love your brothers for the sake of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.***