

Matters that Matter in a Materialistic World

Did the outcome of the Presidential election delight you?

What do you feel were the most important issues of the 2016 Presidential campaign?

- **Did issues matter?**
- **Did YOU matter in this election?**

What were the Christian's duties and responsibilities during this election?

As a good citizen, the Christian must adhere to God's Word when dealing with political issues.

Romans 13:1-7 "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

1 Timothy 2:1 "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,

1 Peter 2:17 "Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

Jeremiah 29:7 "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare."

Matthew 22:21 "They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."

Titus 3:1 "Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,

1 Peter 2:13-17 "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Acts 5:29 "But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."

Are our tasks complete now that the election is over?

What must we do? What must we do?

Answer: PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

7 Keys Things to Pray Now That the Elections Are Over

1. Healing in the Church. One of the worst things to happen in this election has been the division among followers of Jesus. Pray for healing of relationships and for the desire of Jesus for unity among his disciples to be fulfilled. “May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17:23).

2. Healing in the nation. This election has revealed the depths of division in our nation. Opposing world views that fought over the ballot box will continue to battle unless the Lord steps in and brings his peace. Pray especially for the true tolerance that allows for opposing views to be expressed freely. “He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near” (Eph. 2:17).

3. Wisdom for our new president. Leading this nation through these perilous time requires wisdom that only God can give. Pray especially for the choices for the cabinet and key advisors. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise” (Ps. 111:10).

4. Supreme Court choice. For many, the selection of Supreme Court justices became a key part of this election. Pray for wisdom for the president and the senate as they make choices that will impact our nation for many years. “This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another’ (Zech. 7:9).

5. Truth to guide the media. Media bias and accuracy was a key concern and issue during this election. Pray for a spirit of truth to cover the media and that reporters and news networks would see their role as givers of information and not as shapers of thought. “Have I not written thirty sayings for you, sayings of counsel and knowledge, teaching you to be honest and to speak the truth, so that you bring back truthful reports to those you serve?” (Prov. 22:20-21).

6. A stable economy. An election season such as this past one brings great uncertainty to an economy that was already unsteady. Ask the Lord to steady our economy so that his people can continue to give generously toward helping the poor and advancing the Kingdom of Christ. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

7. Revival and a Great Awakening. One of the greatest benefits of this confusing election season has been the increasing awareness within the Church that we desperately need revival. Pray for God to send another revival and Great Awakening to our nation that would awaken the Church, bring salvation to millions, and transform the culture of our nation. “Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you!” (Isa. 64:1-2).

David Butts, President of Harvest Prayer Ministries and the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee.

When we are challenged in the coming days, months, years...the future, we are to show our Christian character as we respond verbally and with other actions as determined by wisdom given by God Almighty.

The Characteristics or Qualities of a Christian Life, 1 Peter 3:8-12

Before you read....What do you think the marks of the Christian Life might be? Give your opinion in lieu of reading the Scripture first!

1 Peter 3:8-12, *“Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. ⁹ Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. ¹¹ They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”*

The Word according to Peter: Marks of the Christian Life...

- **Unified...one mind! Hearts United!**
Words of Jesus who prayed for his people that they might be one, as He and His Father are One (John 17:21-23).
Paul reminding the Christians in Corinth that they are one body in spite of all their different qualities and gifts (1 Cor. 12:12-31)...and that the Christians in Rome might be of one mind (Romans 12:4,16). Over and over again, Paul pleaded with the church in the many cities to be of one mind in the Lord.
- **Genuinely Sympathetic...Rejoice with those that rejoice...and weep with those that weep.** When one suffers all suffer; when one rejoices...all rejoice.
- **Exhibits Brotherly Love...Jesus said, “New Commandment I give you...to love one another; this will all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”**
- **Shows compassion! God...showed so much compassionate that He gave us His only Son...to die for us.**
- **Humble heart...humility with contrite heart!**
Genuine and sincere...repentant.
- **Forgiving**

Summary by Peter: *Picture of the person whom God receives and the person God rejects.*

1 Peter 3:13-15a, “Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.” ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord.”

Christian Security in a Threatening World!

We see how Peter was a student and ardent believer in the Old Testament:

Isaiah 50:9: “Behold, the Lord God helps me; who will declare me guilty?”

Isaiah 8:13, “But the Lord of hosts, Him you shall regard as holy; let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.”

Three (3) Great Conceptions in this passage:

1. **A Passionate love of goodness...like a Zealot (fanatical patriot).**
It is only when man falls in love with goodness that the wrong things lose their fascination and their power. If you want to know peace, love goodness.
2. **An Attitude of Suffering that is Different than the World’s Idea of Suffering:**
 - *Human Suffering...physical suffering: death, sorrow, distress of mind, weariness and pain of body.*
 - *Suffering because of “Being a Christian”
Unpopularity, persecution, sacrifice for principle...deliberate choosing of the Christian life.*
3. **The Christian’s perspective as what is the most important in life....God and Jesus Christ are the supremacies of life—The Christian’s relationship to God in Christ is life’s greatest value.**
The Christian has no value and is most miserable when he places other things in front of what has eternal value.

Therefore, even in suffering the Christian is still responsible to himself, others, and to God.

Summary: *No person escapes suffering, but for the Christian suffering cannot touch the things which matter most!*

1 Peter 3:15b, 16, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.”

In this world, the Christian will be called upon to defend his faith.

Peter tells us how to defend the faith...and answer the critics of our trust in the Lord God through Jesus:

1. **Our defense must be REASONABLE.**
To appropriately discuss our position as a Christian, we must know what we believe and have thought it out...we must be able to state it intelligently and intelligibly.

IMPORTANT: OUR FAITH MUST BE A FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE AND NOT A SECOND-HAND STORY.

If we will do our part, the Holy Spirit will do the rest.

2. Our defense must be GIVEN WITH GENTLENESS.

The lost may be wooed into the Christian faith when they cannot be bullied.

Don't be arrogant or belligerent....

Gerald's theory of Defending the Faith:

Pray about it, Prepare for it, Practice it, Protect it, Petition the Holy Spirit to be your helper, and Present it.

Remember...Heaven and Hell are real places prepared for followers of God or the evil one.

3. Our defense must be GIVEN WITH REVERENCE.

Any argument in which the Christian is involved must be carried on in a tone which God can hear with clarity and heart-felt.

God will not "high-five" His children if they present God's character as one that is not of love and merciful. God is not willing that any should perish. Let the person choose whom he will serve....but don't twist his arm in trying to get him to surrender.

4. Our defense must be A GIVING LIVING LIFE.

- *Let a person so act that his/her conscience is clear.*
- *Let your life meet criticism with a life which is beyond reproach.*
Such conduct will silence slander and disarm criticism.

**BE THANKFUL, GRATEFUL, RESPECTFUL, HOSPITABLE, APPROACHABLE,
LOVING, KIND, AND GENEROUS...In the**

"Matters that Matter in this Materialistic World."

*Stay Humble...Don't Mumble and
Grumble!*