

## Trump Won. Now What?

Trump won. But what does that mean for the church?

It means we need to pray. Pray for President-elect Trump, and pray for our nation. Pray for peace and wisdom. This is not a time for gloating, but for reconciliation and humility. Now just as much as always, we should pray for our leaders whoever they are, as the Bible commands us to do in 1 Timothy 2:1-4. Saint Paul writes:

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

And if we do not know how to pray, then this wonderful prayer from the hymnal for our nation is an excellent starting point:

*Almighty God, You have given us this good land as our heritage. Grant that we remember Your generosity and constantly do Your will. Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education, and an honorable way of life. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion, from pride and arrogance, and from every evil course of action. Grant that we, who came from many nations with many different languages, may become a united people. Support us in defending our liberties, and give those to whom we have entrusted the authority of government the spirit of wisdom, that there may be justice and peace in our land. When times are prosperous, may our hearts be thankful, and in troubled times do not let our trust in You fail; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.* (Lutheran Service Book pg 313)

Along with these prayers for our leaders and our nation, we can also give thanks to God for many good things. We can thank God that Christians are still free in this country to worship largely without fear of punishment. We can thank God for the major repudiation we saw in this election of liberalism and its hatred of the church. And we can thank God that as a result of the Supreme Court justices that Donald Trump appointed during his first term in office, the terrible scourge of *Roe v Wade* was repealed and abortion has been restricted in many states, including here in Iowa.

We can also pray that the man who appointed those conservative Supreme Court justices in the past will do so again in the future, should an opportunity arise, in order that the laws of our nation and the lives of the unborn may be defended for years to come.

Moreover, we should pray for the people of our nation, both those who voted for Trump and those who did not, that they may be reconciled to one another, that bitterness be removed, and that we may all repent of our errors and build one another up in the church.

Because although there are many good reasons to support President Trump, there are also many reasons to be concerned about him.

For one thing, reasons to support Trump like the economy, immigration, and limiting government overreach and bureaucracy should not be our primary reasons. Much better reasons for a Christian to support him should be in hopes of protecting the lives of the unborn, and protecting our families and society from the false doctrines of liberalism, transgenderism, and homosexuality.

So we should pray that Christians learn to prioritize what really matters to their faith. It may be that our secondary opinions about what constitutes good government policy are also derived from Christian values, but we need to acknowledge that some issues are less clear than others, and we need to speak to our brothers and sisters in Christ about all these issues with wisdom and gentleness.

And what about Donald Trump himself? Trump's policies may appeal to conservative Christian voters, but does his personal character reflect a life of faith? His enemies may often be right in their accusations about his sexual misconduct, his lies, inflammatory language, pride, and greed. We must not delude ourselves that he is morally upright. If he is a Christian believer, his manner of life and lack of public repentance do not bear strong witness to it. So we should pray for his faith. Because if President Trump has proven to be a blessing to the cause of Christian morality in this nation in the past, how much more of a blessing will he be if he learns to confess Christ with a humble and repentant heart?

A good Biblical example of all this is found in the book of Daniel. The prophet Daniel served faithfully in the government administration of many pagan kings of Babylon, from Nebuchadnezzar to Darius. During the time of Nebuchadnezzar – who might be compared to Donald Trump – Daniel obeyed and honored the king as far as possible, unless he was asked to do anything contrary to God's will. For Daniel recognized that Nebuchadnezzar was God's agent, sent to carry out His will in the world, to punish Judah for its idolatry, and to carry out peace and justice in the nations.

But as we read in Daniel 4, God warned Nebuchadnezzar in a dream about his pride. Daniel counseled Nebuchadnezzar, "Break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity."

Yet Nebuchadnezzar ignored the warning. He failed to glorify God, he pridefully magnified himself. So he was cut down and stripped of his sanity, to live like a beast under heaven for seven years, until he learned to acknowledge that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He will.

May all the leaders of the world be spared such punishment. May each one of us praise the God of heaven, who has established Donald Trump yet again for a second term of office. And may Trump himself learn, if he has not learned already, to glorify the God of heaven and serve him obediently, for the sake of God's people and church, to the eternal praise and glory of Jesus in the world.

And finally, we pray all these things knowing that we do not put our trust in princes, or in presidents or elected officials or any men. We do not put our trust in them, but we acknowledge them as agents of God in the world to carry out His holy will. We look to these leaders and give them respect and honor and revenue wherever it is due, always recognizing the true Prince and Lord whom they serve and represent, whether they themselves realize it or not. For they are sent to carry out the ministry and rule of the true King of kings and Lord of lords, who lives and reigns forever, Jesus Christ. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation. Amen.

May the blessings of God be yours in Christ Jesus,

Pastor Wagner