

The Timeless Voice: Make the gospel great again

Commentary by Greg Baker

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” – Matthew 6:33.

We are often called to patriotism and love of country. “Make America great again,” we are told.

But while we should love our city, state, and nation and desire what is best for our neighbors, we must also remember this is not our eternal home.

I love Des Moines, and I love America. I am so thankful that this is where God has placed me. I love showing off my city to visitors and sharing with them all Des Moines has to offer. I want what is best for my city and my country. It brings me joy when they are both doing well.

I must remember, however, this world is perishing, including my nation and my city. All of these things are temporary and will someday come to an end (Matthew 24:35). It is the Kingdom of God that will reign forever, not the kingdom of man. If I put all of my effort into merely building this nation without building God’s Kingdom at the same time, my labor will be in vain. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7, we must learn to make the most of our place in the world without becoming engrossed in it, because this world in its present form is passing away.

This world is also no longer my home. I have been adopted by God, and because of this I am no longer a citizen of this earth. Rather, I am a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20). Heaven is now my home, and, as a co-heir with Christ, the world to come is my inheritance.

The greatest thing we can do for the nation God has placed us in is be His ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20). This world needs us to speak truth to the dying, to be the aroma of life (2 Corinthians 2:16). When hope is placed in Wall Street, Washington, a 401k, or even the American dream, what Americans really need is God's ambassadors to share the true hope they can have in Christ and His coming Kingdom. God's Kingdom is greater than any nation, political party, career, denomination, sports team, or other worldly thing that divides us.

Put the Kingdom first. Put the Kingdom first by serving your neighbor. Put the Kingdom first by investing more in the next life than your 401k. Put the Kingdom first by serving Christ's Church more than your career or hobbies. Put the Kingdom first by campaigning for the gospel more than for a political candidate. Put the Kingdom first by holding and proclaiming the truths of the Cross higher than the American flag. Put the Kingdom first by allowing the Bible to form your worldview more than any worldly ideology. Then your labor will never perish and will never be in vain.

"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" – 1 Corinthians 15:58.

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