



THE FOREST HILL NEWS

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Forest Hill Church of Christ

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Haston Handley, Youth
Jonah Wood, Youth

VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship..... 10:30 A.M.
Afternoon Worship.... 1:30 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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He IS ABLE

Ephesians 3:20

He is able to do,
For He is neither idle, nor inactive, nor dead.

He is able to do what we *ask*,
For He hears and answers prayer.

He is able to do what we ask or *think*,
For He reads our thoughts.

He is able to do *all* that we ask or think,
For He knows it all and can perform it all.

He is able to do *more* than we ask or think,
For His expectations are higher than ours.

He is able to do *much* more abundantly than all that we ask or think,
For He does not give His grace by calculated measure.

He is able to do *far* more abundantly than all that we ask or think,
For he is a God of superabundance.

C. Samuel Storms

Political Decisions Can Be Spiritual Decisions

Victor M. Eskew

The principles of Christianity found in the Bible are to permeate every area of our lives. They are to be our guide at home, in the church, at work, in our recreation, and in our politics. We are not free to “pick-and-choose” where we will allow Bible teaching to be applicable to our lives. The will of God is pertinent to every realm of the Christian’s life.

We are fast approaching a national election. Some of the political decisions we make will also be spiritual decisions. Let’s consider an Old Testament example.

After the death of Solomon, Rehoboam came to the throne. At his inauguration, Jeroboam and the congregation of Israel gave an ultimatum to the new king. Their words to the monarch were: *“Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee”* (1 Kings 12:4). Rehoboam refused to make it lighter. In fact, he promised to make the yoke heavier (1 Kings 12:14). This decision caused the kingdom of Israel to divide. *“So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither [have we] inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But [as for] the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them”* (1 Kings 12:16-17).

After the division of the kingdom, Jeroboam (king of the northern ten tribes) was concerned about the nation returning to the house of David (southern kingdom), especially when it came time to *“go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem”* (1 Kings 12:27). To keep this from happening, Jeroboam did three things. First, **he set up calves of gold** in Dan and Bethel and proclaimed to Israel: *“behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt”* (1 Kings 12:28-29). Second, **he created a new priesthood**, *“and made priests of the lowest of people, which were not of the sons of Levi”* (1 Kings 12:31). Third, he **“ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar”** (1 Kings 12:32).

At this point in the history of Israel, individuals had to make some important decisions. These decisions were both political and spiritual in nature. Would those who revolted against the higher taxation policies of Rehoboam continue to side with Jeroboam (northern kingdom)? Would they go along with his idolatry and trans-

gression of the Law of Moses? In 2 Chronicles 11:13-15, we read of the Levites who returned to Rehoboam (southern kingdom). In 2 Chronicles 11:16, we read of others who returned as well. As you read this verse, listen to the reason they returned to Jerusalem. *“And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers.”* This was a political decision. They would leave one king and yield allegiance to another. The Israelites mentioned in this verse made their decision based on their desire to follow God. Note: Their political decision was based upon their religious beliefs. Their decision was both political and spiritual.

The United States is coming up on a presidential election. We, as Christians, have important decisions that have to be made. Sometimes our political decisions are also spiritual decisions. Sadly, some do not see it this way, or, they have formed some type of reasoning that allows them to compromise Biblical principles and support ungodly principles.

One of the decisions we must make involves the issue of **ABORTION**. Abortion involves the willful killing of a human life while still in the womb of the mother. It is shedding innocent blood. According to Proverbs 6:16-19, God hates it. In the last 20 or so years, one of the presidential candidates has opposed abortion (killing babies) while the other one has supported abortion (killing babies). My friends, this makes our choice for a candidate both political and spiritual in nature. Do you support abortion (killing babies)?

Another decision we must make revolves around **HOMOSEXUALITY**, especially as it concerns gay marriage (men marrying men and women marrying women). Some have made it clear that marriage can only be between a man and a woman, while others take the opposite position. One party especially has made it clear they support gay marriages. Because of this, one’s decision as to party affiliation becomes both a political and spiritual decision. Why is this the case? Because God has made it clear in His divine Word that homosexuality is sin. It is a perversion of the worst kind. In Romans 1:26, He calls homosexuality a “vile” affection. In Romans 1:27, homosexuality is referred to as “error.” In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, homosexuality is labeled as being unrighteous and these verses proclaim that those who practice it “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Remember, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed be-

(continued on page 4)

Political Decisions Can Be Spiritual Decisions (continued from page 2)

cause of it (Gen. 18:20; 19:4-7,13,27-29; Jude 1:7). That is why homosexuality is called sodomy. Do you support sodomy/homosexuality?

Let's read 2 Chronicles 11:16 again. "*And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers.*" What was the key element of the decision of the Israelites? It was the "set of their hearts." Did they desire the higher taxes of Rehoboam? No. Did they appreciate his oppressive style? No. But, they set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel. When Jeroboam (northern kingdom) opposed the law of God, their decision was simple. They returned to Jerusalem (southern kingdom).

Sadly, the majority of the Israelites did not return to Israel. They compromised their "values" (the religion of Jehovah) and sided with the policies and practices of Jeroboam that went against the teaching of God. The result of their decision was total apostasy. Not one righteous king ever ruled in the northern kingdom. Ultimately, Israel was carried away into Assyrian captivity in 722 B.C. The promise of God held true for Israel. He had said through the psalmist: "*The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God*" (Psa. 9:17). Do you think this promise still holds true today? Please, dear reader, as you cast your vote in the upcoming elections, remember that political decisions can be, and often are, spiritual decisions as well.

God is watching. He will weigh us in the balances of His divine justice just as He did Israel of old.

(from *Seek the Old Paths*, Dec 2015)

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