

Living As Salt + Light In America

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[0:00] All right, you got your seatbelts buckled? We're going to go on a little bit of a ride today. It's going to be a lot. I hope you have your thinking caps on and lots to cover.

But I want to start with something a little, I don't know, silly. Let's see my clicker. There we go. On the one side, on the left-hand side, we have, what are those things?

Packing peanuts. Yes. And then on the right, we have salt, coarse ground salt. What do they have in common?

Well, they're both put into boxes, and they're both shipped all across the country. That's about it. They serve two entirely different purposes.

Packing peanuts fill empty spaces. They occupy the void. Salt, on the other hand, is an active agent.

[1:05] It penetrates. It penetrates. It preserves. It's quite interesting to me that Jesus did not say that we are the packing peanuts of the world. And I don't think we want to be known as packing peanuts.

Just taking up space. Just taking up space. Not causing any friction. Not, you know, getting involved. Don't bother anybody. But instead, we're called to be salt.

Actually, he said we are salt. We are light. Salt gets into the meat. It draws out moisture.

It stops the rot. It flavors the food. And it's only good if it comes into contact with the food. If you don't put the salt on the food, it doesn't do the food any good.

Who wants to have, I don't know, eggs or corn on the cob without salt? I've got to have salt on those. So what I want to do is I want to start with looking at this very classic passage of Scripture in Matthew 5, looking at salt and light and what that call means for us.

[2:17] And then we're going to look at some application. But we're going to make the application specific to where we live in the here and now. So let's go ahead and start with Matthew 5, 13.

We are, you are, Jesus said, the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?

Now, it's interesting to me that the translations of this phrase have kind of automatically assumed that the word that's used for lost its taste, the word that's used there, the Greek word, there's an English word that is the equivalent of it, and it's the word moron.

So you could actually literally translate this to if the salt has become a moron. And it's, here's another place where it's translated a little bit differently.

Where is, this is from 1 Corinthians 1, 20, Apostle Paul, where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish or made a moron of the wisdom of the world?

[3:32] And so that's kind of the idea here. It's not so much talking about the flavor, the flavor of salt, but what makes salt distinctive. And salt has a number of properties, a number of uses that it's used for.

It's used for flavoring. It's used for preserving. It's used for even wounds because it can disinfect. It stings like nobody's business if you put salt in a wound, but it will serve to clean it.

And so salt has a number of different purposes. But if it loses its taste, if it loses its properties, how shall its saltiness, what makes salt, salt, be restored?

It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet, which is what you would do with salt that had become flavorless or salt that had become worthless. They would throw it down on their pathways and make little sidewalks because the salt would clear the way.

It would clear any brush, any vegetation out of their pathway. So that's what they would use it for. Now, with all of that being said, let's talk about what that looks like then.

[4:46] Salt and light in terms of influencing culture because this is the call that Christ has made. When he said, you are the salt of the earth, we are to be as salt is to food, we are to be that to the world around us.

So salt serves to make food palatable. It's seasoning for flavor while it's also preserving against rot. Now, with each of these, with both salt and light, there is a pleasant aspect to it, and there's also an offensive aspect to it.

And so let's look at both of those. First, the pleasant. Christians are agents of what is known as common grace in our culture. Our culture benefits just from the idea that Christians are around. It elevates the culture. Common grace is the idea that all mankind benefits from the idea that Christians are alive and well and serving in the world.

The rain falls on the just and the unjust alike, he says later on in Matthew 5. So it's this impact that all the world benefits, whether you're a Christian or not, just from the idea that Christians are in our society.

[6:07] And so we bring joy and stability into our world, into our culture, just by being around. Okay? And everyone benefits from that.

The defensive side of this is that Christians also refuse to participate in the depravity of the age. And that's problematic for the world because the world likes to live in a depraved way.

Worldly people feel judged by this because our distinctiveness, what makes salt salt, what makes Christians serve as Christians in our world, what makes us salty, exposes the decay that's around us.

And people don't like to have their decay exposed. They don't want to be called out. They don't want to feel judged for the way that they live. And so sometimes our involvement in the culture is going to make people feel uncomfortable or feel judged.

It's not us doing that necessarily. It's just how our impact in the world is going to happen. And then he also uses the phrase, you are the light of the world.

[7:17] A city on a hill cannot be hidden. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. So that's actually a picture of Jerusalem. Jerusalem sits high on a hill. You can see it lit up in the darkness as you're traveling from all different angles because of that.

So a city lights up the area. Nor do people take a lamp and put it under a basket. We don't do that. We don't hide it. We don't turn on a light bulb and then put it under a bushel and hide it.

But we put it on a stand and it gives light in all of the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. So as we act as salt in the culture, we also act as light in the culture. So our lives bring light to the world around us.

So again, light provides for direction. Light's the pathway. Provides for safety. But it also exposes what is hidden in the darkness.

[8:22] So like salt, there is a pleasant aspect to it that impacts our culture. There's also an offensive aspect to it. Here's the pleasant. The world is a dark and confusing place.

We know that. You just have to watch the news or go through your social media account or whatever it is. And you can see that the world is a dark and confusing place.

But the visible love of believers in action provides peace and comfort that even unbelievers benefit from and appreciate. Absolutely true.

We bring a calm. We bring a calm. We bring a peace. We bring a comfort. A stabilizing aspect to the world around us. That's a benefit.

That's a common grace benefit that benefits all of society. But here's the offensive side of this. That when light shines on the deeds of darkness, they are exposed and convicted.

[9:19] We don't do the convicting. We just, because of the way that we live, the impact of it, people feel convicted in and of themselves because of that.

And by displaying what is good, right, and true, we also shine a spotlight on the wickedness of the culture. So how many of you would like to have a spotlight shown right into your face?

It's not fun, is it? Right? You know, your kid gets a hold of a flashlight and the first thing they want to do is shine it in dad's eyes. You know, just, you know. It's not fun.

But this is what we do. Sometimes our very existence shines that kind of a spotlight into the lives of people to expose the wickedness that they have.

And so this is the offensive, if you will, part of what it means to be light in the world around us.

[10:20] So when it comes to now applying what it means to be salt and light in the world around us, how do we do that? How do we apply that? Because you and I don't live in the nation of Israel under King David's reign.

We don't, we don't, I don't know if you noticed. We don't, it's not where we live. We don't live in Babylon during the captivity period where Nebuchadnezzar has come and destroyed Jerusalem and destroyed the temple and take us into, we don't live during that time.

We don't live in Galilee during the time of Christ. We don't live in Ephesus or we don't live in Philippi. As Paul writes these letters to the locals, we don't live during that timeframe under Roman rule.

We just don't. Nor do we live in Reformation Europe. We don't live in Asia. We don't live in South America. But we live in the United States of America. And we live, the year is 2026.

I hope I got that right. And this is the world that God has called us to live for such a time as this.

He's called us to be salt and light in this world in the here and now.

[11:32] And so I like the sign that says we're living in the good old days. I like that because God has called us to live in the here and now, to have an impact in the here and now, not so much to reminisce about how things used to be.

So we need to have an impact in our world. So now I want to give some credit here. And I want to actually mention a few names for if you are interested in following people, either podcasts or on social media.

This is one of them. And I'm getting some of my teaching this morning from this particular man, Josh Howerton, who is a pastor in Dallas, Texas, Dallas metro area.

And wonderful young pastor and brilliant as well and has really spoken some good things, I think, for us in the church, for us in 2026 anyway.

And so with that in mind, if you want to actually write some of these names, if you're not familiar with them, that way you can look them up later. Josh Howerton is someone that I would recommend that you follow. I want to talk about how God has established then three institutions for the good of the world.

[12:49] Okay. The first is the family. God created these distinct and they are distinct from each other. You have the family is the first institution, if you will.

This goes all the way back to Genesis chapter one, Genesis chapter two. God's created the family. Okay. I don't know of anyone who's going to argue with me.

There are some of the points that I'm going to make today that some people are going to argue with me about it. I get that. That's fine. Hopefully we'll make the case. God has also created the church. We're living in the church age and God has created this institution.

And that's, you know, we're called to be a part of that as believers in Christ. So God has created the family. God has created the church. God has created also the state and these are all distinct, separate from each other institutions.

Like for instance, the church, I represent the church. I'm not going to come into your home and tell you how you ought to direct your family. Your family is a distinct institution and operates on its own, if you will.

[13:56] In the same way, we don't like the state to come in and tell the church or necessarily tell the family how it should operate, how it should do things.

Unless either one of those are committing crimes that have been determined to be crimes. So these are three distinct institutions that God has created.

I don't know that anybody is going to, and when we talk about the state, we're talking about a country. We're talking about a nation here. And so a Christian man should therefore seek to be, this is what, and I'm emphasizing a Christian man here, and this applies to women as well.

But I do think that men ought to lead in these areas. Men ought to lead in their families. Men ought to lead in the church. Men ought to lead in the state as well. Doesn't, again, mean that women can't do some of these roles.

But it's just, I do believe that men have been called to be the head of these, particularly the church and the home. So I do think that a man ought to be a family man.

[15:07] That makes sense, doesn't it? Men, you ought to be a family man. Okay, that's a goal worth shooting for. I believe also that men should seek to be a churchman.

We don't use that term very often. But a churchman is something that we are called to be. I don't mean it in the formal role of being a pastor or minister.

Some men are called to that. But in terms of your involvement in and participation in and working for the good of the church, men ought to serve in that capacity.

And I believe that men should also be statesmen. Now, again, I mean this in a more general role, not a specific definition.

And so because of that distinction, I want to show you the definition. This is from definition.com or dictionary.com. So I'm focusing now on the highlighted portion here.

[16:08] A person who exhibits great wisdom and ability in dealing with important public issues. I do think that men and women ought to be informed about public issues that are of importance in the world today.

We ought to be informed. We ought to participate in that forum, in those discussions. And so not necessarily in directing the affairs of a government. Not all are called to be politicians or to be mayors or council members or those kinds of things.

Some are. And I do believe that Christians are called to serve in those capacities. And if you have that kind of interest, I would encourage you to run for office and to be involved in that way.

But all of us should be statesmen in the sense of being able to discuss and to be informed about the issues of the day, what's happening in the world around us today.

Again, God has created these institutions, the family, the church, and the state. And so we ought to be a family man, a church man, a statesman as well.

[17:22] Accordingly, it follows. Now, this is where I may lose some people. That's okay. I think I'm pretty solid ground making this argument. Accordingly, it follows then that a family won't thrive unless the father loves his family.

Is anyone going to argue that that's not true? Anyone going to say, I don't know, I don't know. I think a father can be apathetic towards his family.

I think that's a good thing. No, no, no. Actually, here we go. A church will not fulfill its mission unless the people love their church.

I think that's a logical conclusion to follow, that if you're going to have an impact on the local church, that you're going to love your local church.

In terms of seeking its betterment, in terms of what it means, I'm not talking about emotionally. I'm not talking about you're going to have some sort of romantic feeling about your church. I'm not talking about that.

[18:25] I'm talking about doing the things that love does. And love, a person who loves the local church is going to seek for its good. It's going to seek that the gospel goes forth, that people are saved, that people are disciplined, who are growing, that are participating in the ministries of the local church so that it flourishes, so that it thrives.

Okay? That follows. And again, I'm going to show you some passages of Scripture in case people might not agree here. Your husbands love your wives. Nobody has an argument with that.

As Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. So in a sense, if Christ loved the church, we ought to love what Christ loves.

Okay? And he gave himself up for the church. You have this admonition from Hebrews chapter 10. Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and to good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

These are doing the things of love as you are participating in the local church. This is what it would look like for believers who love their church.

[19:39] Now, accordingly, I would also say this, that a nation can't flourish unless its citizens love their nation. And there's going to be some pushback on this one from people both outside the church and from people inside the church.

But let me make the case here. This is an issue for us in our day and age because either, if you are of a certain persuasion, you hate America.

America. We see that in the news. We see it in social media. We see it all around us. There are a larger and probably growing number of people who just despise the United States of America and

think it's the worst place on earth, yet they still want to come here.

Part of what makes them want to come here, though, as we'll see in a moment, is that they want to overturn it. They want to defeat it. So we'll talk about that as well. Part of why it's allowed to happen in our world is because we're told by some in the church that loving your country is not something that a good Christian should do, that we shouldn't be caring about the things of this world.

We should only care about the things of heaven. We should only care about things that are spiritual. And that is, I don't know, what word should I use here? That is bunk.

[21:03] That is poppycock. That is baloney. Not biblical. I'll demonstrate that in a moment here. Therefore, a Christian man will pursue his nation's righteousness and its welfare.

What does it look like for us as a people, as believers, to love our nation? Well, if you look at it, there's no direct command for us to love our nation.

You're not going to find that verse there. But you are going to find verses about how we ought to impact our nation. That's what it looks like for us to love our nation.

If we didn't love our nation, we wouldn't seek righteousness for our nation. If we didn't care about our nation, we wouldn't seek for its welfare. Okay?

So it follows then that a Christian man is going to pursue righteousness and the welfare and some other things here. I'm running out of room on my notes to do that.

[22:06] Okay? So from Proverbs 14, 34, righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. Now, some might say, well, this is Old Testament, so it's applying to Israel.

No, this is a general principle about any nation. Now, there are some Old Testament passages of Scripture that apply specifically to Israel. This is just a general principle about any nation.

Any nation that demonstrates righteousness, God is going to exalt that nation. Any nation that exhibits sinfulness and wickedness, that is going to be a reproach and God will judge.

And I think that that's kind of where we're at today in terms of our own history. If you look at the history of the United States of America, God blessed, I believe this, that God blessed us as a nation because of how it was founded.

We'll talk about that in a little bit too. And how it grew. Not everything about it was perfect. But we grew as a nation and wanted to serve God as a nation.

[23:08] That's how the nation was founded. And we have gotten far away from that as a nation. And we've seen God's blessing to the United States of America fall and become less and less of an impact as a result of that.

Jeremiah 29 verse 4 is an interesting passage. Jeremiah 29, God is instructing the nation of Israel as they are taken into captivity.

So it's not a nation any longer, but they are still his people. They are still known as Israel, even though they don't have a land anymore. They're taken into captivity into Babylon. This very pagan nation ruled by a very pagan king, Nebuchadnezzar, who was wicked, who created statues of himself that he would force people to bow down to.

We find that like, whoa, that's a little bit more than a red flag. That's really problematic. And three fellows who ended up in a fiery furnace but were saved found that out, how terrible this king was to live for.

So the instructions that God gives to Israel here are, I think, the principles behind them do inform us. They don't directly apply to us, but they inform us in terms of how we live today.

[24:35] So thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Notice God says, I did this.

Not Nebuchadnezzar. I directed this. I'm the one who caused Nebuchadnezzar to come and destroy the city because you behaved so poorly. You didn't obey.

You chased after false gods. You treated people horribly. You did this over and over and over again. And so finally, God said, enough.

And directed Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, to come in and destroy them and take them into captivity. But God hadn't forgotten them. So he gives them this instruction.

Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their produce. I want you to notice here.

They're living in Babylon. So he's telling them, get property because you don't build on land that you don't own.

[25:35] Get property. Build houses. Live in them. Plant gardens and eat their produce. In other words, you're going to be here for a while. Okay? And then take wives and have sons and

daughters.

Did you know there's a movement afoot, not just here, but in other parts of the world, where it's like, oh, I'm not going to have kids. You know, the world's going terrible.

I don't know if you can get much more terrible than Babylon. Babylon was pretty bad. And yet they're still saying, have kids. Get married. Have kids. Right? And this is such an emphasis that he kind of repeats this or emphasizes it even more.

Take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there and do not decrease. Peace. I would say that we have the same mandate. That actually goes back to the dominion mandate, Genesis chapter 1. And then notice verse 7. So the people were instructed to seek the welfare of Babylon.

[27:04] Babylon was a nation state. This was a common thing in their day. The city was known as the nation. All the surrounding territory belonged to that city. So when he talks about seeking the welfare of the city, he's talking about the nation of Babylon.

Seek its welfare. Now, if Israel was instructed to seek the welfare of Babylon, don't you think that God would want us to seek the welfare of the nation that we live in?

Even if we thought it was as evil and wicked as Babylon? It's not. Well, it's getting close. I mean, I don't want to do a side-by-side comparison here because we might be in trouble.

But it's pretty bad here. But where I have sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on his behalf. Pray to the Lord that God blesses Babylon.

Basically what he's saying. Is it appropriate for us to pray for our nation that God would bless it? Absolutely.

[28:05] And we have New Testament instruction to that effect as well. For in its welfare you will find your welfare. As the nation does well, so you too will do well.

I would think that for believers, we're told to pray for kings. 1 Timothy 2, we're going to see that a little bit. We're told to pray for our kings. And it's like, oh, well, when I agree with the king and he's the one I voted for, I have no problem praying for him.

But when it's the other guy, it's the other team, and I don't like him, I'm not going to pray for him. No. You pray for him. And you pray for the welfare of the nation, for the blessing of the nation, because in its welfare you will find your welfare.

So we're instructed in this way to do these things. Here's our passage in 1 Timothy 2. I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgiving be made for all people.

Okay, I can pray for everyone. And for kings. And all who are in high positions. We're supposed to be praying for our governing authorities. Now, if we're not supposed to, as some people would say, as some pastors and some churches would espouse, well, we can't get involved in politics, we can't get involved in the affairs of this world because it's of this world.

[29:25] How are we praying for them? Because I can't pray intelligently for people.

I can't pray intelligently if I don't know anything about them. So being informed so that I can pray well for them is a part of what God has commanded us to do.

That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. Why do we pray for our political leaders?

That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. Sometimes God allows that for us. And we're able to do this.

At other times, when our nation is espousing things and promoting things that are evil and wicked, we have to take a stand. And so we don't exactly get to do this part of leading a peaceful and quiet life.

[30:38] Because a stand is appropriate there. We don't run into hiding. And yet the principle still remains that the goal for us as believers is this peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

Can I make a suggestion that that's kind of what this flag represents? If you look at the patriots that began this in the United States early on before we became a country, the patriots then would fly this flag in a sense of leave us alone.

Don't tread on me. It's the idea of being able to live a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified. Now for some, it's become kind of a libertarian, I got my guns kind of a mindset. Okay? And I get that. That can be fun.

But the reason why you want to be able to bear arms, right, is so that you can live a quiet and peaceful life.

[31:51] That's the whole goal of it. Except for on Target Day, and it's not quiet. And I want you to see how he goes on.

This is a good thing. And it's pleasing in the sight of God, our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. It's how we represent the Lord in the culture that we live in.

Romans chapter 13, which is about the authority that God has given the state or the king. And toward the end of that passage, it says, Oh, no one anything except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Jesus taught this principle. Paul is expounding on that here. Verse 9, for the commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, or any other commandment are all summed up in this word.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

[33:06] And we have seen this command. It is a wonderful command because it's a summary command. If you're loving your neighbor, then you're not stealing from them.

You're not murdering them. You're not lying to them or cheating them or committing adultery. And you're not doing any of these things because you love your neighbor. So it just kind of covers it all. And it's a good thing. Now, here's a quote from Josh Howerton, the man that I pointed out to you before. And I want you to follow along with this. Because we're going to go in what might seem a sharp left turn or right turn here.

The mission of the church then, in part, is to be the salt of the earth. We've been talking about this. This means resisting evil and decay wherever we find it. Yes, we should resist ideologies of demons that send people to hell.

I would hope we would resist that, right? That destroy societies that result in poverty and historically result in the persecution of Christians. It might well be put this way.

[34:07] Love your neighbor as yourself. Oppose Islamic socialism. They go together. I believe this. Because if you look historically at what Islam wants to accomplish in the world, not just us, it is pure domination.

They want to seek to overthrow the government of the United States of America to impose their will and their way on our country. It's already happening.

It has been. Right under our nose. And we have people in our government and people in our society that say, oh, we should allow it to happen because we're supposed to love our neighbors as in the neighbors as in people who are coming into our country.

That's what they call neighbors. And instead, biblically, the people who are coming in to take over the country in this way should be considered invaders.

And we're paying the consequences for that difference.

[35:23] I want you to notice in Deuteronomy chapter 28. Deuteronomy 28, 29. This is Moses' farewell to the people of Israel as he's getting ready to pass away.

And they're getting ready to go cross over into the promised land. Joshua's going to take over. And they're going to be setting up the 12 tribes there in the promised land. And God gives this final warning to the nation that if you obey me, things are going to go pretty great.

But if you don't obey me, let me show you. And it's like three times the length of the if you obey me. And here's the blessings that come. If you don't obey me, here's a whole bunch of stuff that's really going to go wrong for you if you don't.

If you do it your own way, if you become wise in your own eyes and you want to worship false gods and you want to do all this terrible stuff, this is going to be the consequence, the result of that.

Deuteronomy 28. The foreigners who reside among you will rise above you higher and higher, but you will sink lower and lower.

[36:33] So people of our country are going to sink lower and lower. Its citizens sink lower and lower. The foreigners among us would rise higher and higher in authority over us.

They will lend to you, but you will not lend to them. They will be the head, but you will be the tail. All these curses will come on you. They will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed because you did not obey the Lord your God and observe the commands and decrees he gave you.

Again, this was given to Israel, but the principle of this, behind this, is happening right now in our country.

There is a candidate for Senate here in the state of Michigan who is an Islamic socialist or an Islamic communist, Marxist, however you want to refer that.

And the goal of that religion. They have a four-point plan for how they seek to take over a nation.

[37:38] And none of it becomes violent until the very end. Oh, we're just moderates. We're peace-loving people.

You'll hear that. And you'll hear that refrain from Christian groups as well who promote policies that will allow for, I would refer to them as invaders, over us.

That are allowing it to happen. And why can't people see it? Because it's something that's spiritually discerned and the people who are promoting it are spiritually darkened and don't get it.

And so they're allowing for, they're promoting the overtaking of their own country and don't see it.

And as the church, we need to wake up and recognize what's happening around us. This woman in the white dress, I believe, Brigitte Gabriel, she was on a panel talking about what happened in Benghazi.

[39:04] Four Americans lost their lives in Benghazi. This is a number of years ago, more than 10 years ago now, I believe. And they were having this talk about how to prevent something like this from happening again, holding our nation accountable for why they allowed for something like this to happen to begin with.

And a Muslim woman stood up in the back and had it, they were doing question and answers. A Muslim woman wearing the hijab and all of it, training to be a lawyer, citizen of the United States, asked a question about what about all the peace-loving Muslims?

I mean, the vast majority of Muslims are peace-loving and are moderates and, you know, they're not radicals. And how can you keep us down, basically?

I'm very much so paraphrasing. How can you judge one religion based on, and this was Brigitte Gabriel's answer. There are 1.2 billion Muslims in the world today.

Of course, not all of them are radicals. The majority of them are peaceful people. I would grant that as well, somewhat. The radicals are estimated to be between 15% and 25%, according to all the intelligence services around the world.

[40:24] That leaves 75% of them being peaceful. But when you look at that 15% to 25% of the world Muslim population, you're looking at a number of 180 million to 300 million people dedicated to the destruction of Western civilization.

That's as big as the United States of America in terms of numbers. So why would we worry about the radicals, the 15% to 25% that are radicals?

Because it's the radicals that kill. Because it's the radicals that behead and massacre. When you look throughout history, when you look at all the lessons of history, and then she rattles off this short history.

And I'm going to do this. I know this is a little follow along if you can. Most Germans were peaceful. Yet the Nazis drove the agenda, and as a result, 60 million people died.

14 million in concentration camps. 6 million were Jews. The peaceful majority were irrelevant.

When you look at Russia, most Russians were peaceful as well.

[41:31] Yet the Russians, the Bolsheviks, were able to kill 20 million people. The peaceful majority were irrelevant. When you look at China, for example, most Chinese people are peaceful as well.

Yet the Chinese were able to kill 70 million people. The peaceful majority were irrelevant. When you look at Japan prior to World War II, most Japanese were peaceful as well. Yet Japan was able to butcher its way across Southeast Asia, killing 12 million people, mostly killed with bayonets and shovels.

The peaceful majority were irrelevant. On September 11th in the United States, we had 2 to 3 million Arab Muslims living in the United States. It took 19 hijackers, 19 radicals, to bring America down to its knees, destroy the World Trade Center, attack the Pentagon, and kill almost 3,000 Americans that day.

The peaceful majority were irrelevant. Are you starting to get the picture? So for all your powers of reason in talking to us about moderate and peaceful Muslims, I'm glad you're here.

But where are the others speaking out? Even in surveys among the most peaceful, moderate Muslims, they may not do the killing, but by survey they agree with it.
[42:52] By survey, if you ask Muslims today, if a Christian refuses to convert to Islam, should they lose their life?

The vast majority of peaceful Muslims would answer that question, yes. That's what's coming. It's what's already here. It's taken over Southeast Michigan.

And we, as believers, need to wake up and see that that's already not at our doorstep. It's in our backyard. It's in the house. It's here. Two concluding statements that you have there on your notes.

Two concluding statements of application. Yes. We can apologetically love our country, especially as we thank God for the historically unique way Christianity played a role in its founding.

[44:09] A couple things here. Number one, when I say unapologetically, here's what I mean by that. Sometimes you'll hear people say, especially, we don't want to be offensive, right?

So we'll say, well, I know America's got its problems. I mean, it's history with slavery. It's got, you know, oppression and...

But United States is great. That'd be kind of like me on Mother's Day, saying of Sherry, well, she's got a rotten temper and she's kind of a slob, but she's a great mom.

I would never do that. Because I like to live. And it's not true.

That's true. Connie with the save. Yes. It is not true. So why do we do that with our country? What is wrong with just saying, yeah, I love my country.

[45:21] And I'm going to celebrate. Like it's 1776. You know, it's... Absolutely. Be patriotic. Love your nation.

There's nothing wrong with that. And you don't have to have the caveats and the qualifications, qualifying statements, those kind of things.

You can't. The second part of the statement, talking about the historically unique way Christianity played a role in its founding. We do have some people who are trying to... And literally, what they're trying to do is overthrow the country.

And part of their strategy is to deny that America was founded upon Christian principles. Because if they can do that, it's kind of the same strategy that if we can prove that evolution is true, that means that there's no God.

It's the same strategy. If we can prove that the United States wasn't founded as a Christian nation, then boom. We can do this.

[46:23] We can overthrow it. We can do this. We can do this. This is a picture of the 1774 Continental Congress when they were just starting out.

1774. So this is two years before signing of the Declaration of Independence. These men knew what they were getting into. And I want to share with you a little bit about this particular scene. This is a scene of these men praying before the beginning of their Continental Congress meeting that day. Their first one. First ever meeting.

The colonists were well instructed in the principle of the lower magistrate. Concern that they had was we can't rebel against a God provided for authority. So how do we deal with that?

God's not going to honor. God's not going to bless us as a revolutionary country if we're rebelling against a God-given authority. And they believed that was absolutely true.

[47:22] That was taught in their pulpits. It was normal for them to believe that. And so their concern then was to create a new authority, the Continental Congress, that they would be obedient to that authority.

That would become their new authority. And therefore that would give them justification to oppose England and the king. So when the Continental Congress first met on September 5, 1774 at Carpenters Hall in Philadelphia, there was a sober atmosphere knowing that England, their mother country, which had the greatest army on the earth, was sending troops right now to force them into submission.

John Adams wrote to his wife, Abigail, during this time. And we have that for posterity's sake. When the Congress met, Mr. Cushing made a motion that it should be opened with prayer.

Notice this. It was opposed by Mr. J. of New York and Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina. Not because they were opposed to the prayer. Get this. They were opposed because we were so divided in religious sentiments, some Episcopalians, some Quakers, some Anabaptists, some Presbyterians,

some Congregationalists, that we could not join in the same act of worship.

Even though these men, they all believed in the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, that trusting Christ as Savior was what it meant to be saved. They were arguing over modes of baptism and how to pray and different things, not core beliefs.

[48:56] But still that division caused an issue. Mr. Samuel Adams arose and said that he was no bigot and could hear a prayer from any gentleman of piety and virtue who was at the same time a friend of his country.

He was a stranger in Philadelphia, but he had heard of a man by the name of Jacob Duchesne, who deserved that character, and therefore he moved that Mr. Duchesne, an Episcopal clergyman, might be desired to read prayer to Congress tomorrow morning.

The motion was seconded and passed in the affirmative. The date was September 7, 1774, when Jacob Duchesne arrived before the Continental Congress. He began to pray out of the prayer book, out of like an Episcopalian prayer book, pre-written prayers.

And then he read from the Psalter, which on that day was Psalm 35. I'm going to quote part of it here in a bit. And you must remember, this is Adams writing to Abigail, you must remember that this was the next morning after we had heard the cannonade of Boston.

Canons going off in Boston from the British. He then added, it seemed as if heaven had ordained that that Psalm be read that morning.

[50:15] After this, Mr. Duchesne, unexpectedly to everybody, struck out an extemporaneous prayer, which filled the bosom of every man present. It had an excellent effect upon everybody here.

Adams then quotes from part of Psalm 35 to his wife, Abigail. Quote Psalm 35, Plead my cause, O Lord. Plead with them that they strive with me.

Fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for my help. Draw out also the spear and stop the way against them.

Psalm 35. He continued, and this extemporaneous prayer was recorded. O Lord, our heavenly Father, high and mighty King of kings and Lord of lords, who does from thy throne behold all the dwellers on earth and reign with power supreme and uncontrolled over all the kingdoms, empires, and governments.

Look down, we beseech thee, on these are American states who have fled to thee from the rod of the oppressor and thrown themselves on thy gracious protection, desiring henceforth to be dependent only on thee.

[51:23] To thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause. To thee do they now look upon for that countenance and support which thou only can give.

Defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries. Convince them of the unrighteousness of their cause. It goes on. Preserve the health of their bodies, the people who are leading this charge in the United States.

Preserve the health of their bodies, the vigor of their minds. Shower on them and the millions they hear represent. Such temporal blessings as thou seest expedient for them in this world. And crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come.

All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, thy son, our savior. Amen. Ha! Yeah, we weren't founded as a Christian nation.

What kind of moron do you have to believe to be to believe that we weren't founded as a Christian? I meant that moron thing from earlier in the sermon. I don't know if you caught that. This was one of those moments in history that captured the moving of God's spirit.

[52:35] Washington was there. Patrick Henry, John Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, John Jay, John and Samuel Adams. In all 56 delegates, John Adams wrote, It was enough to melt a heart of stone.

I saw the tears gush into the eyes of the old, gray Pacific Quakers of Philadelphia. Quakers were known for their solemnness. We don't get emotional. They got emotional.

Another man I'd encourage you to follow, Nick Freitas. Oh, actually, John Adams' quote. This is important. Some of you are familiar with the bottom part that's kind of highlighted there.

Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people, totally inadequate to the government of any other. I'm going to show you a video that includes this quote. But I want you to notice the part that precedes that.

Because we have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion, avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net.

[53 : 36] Can't have a constitution like ours for people who are not religious or moral. Here's Nick Freitas. We saw him just last week at the men's conference.

Wonderful. Follow along with this. The one thing I would say is that while there is no, you know, obviously legal requirement to be a Christian, to be an American, I think it's about time that we understood what the foundational principles and theology of this country was.

This whole idea, and it's a very popular narrative now to say, oh, that we're just a melting pot, as if there wasn't some sort of definitive creed which actually defined what people were coming to melt into.

That's right. And there is, in my opinion, there is zero way that you can serve the United States of America without once again understanding that it was built upon a Christian framework.

Doesn't mean you have to be a Christian to enjoy the benefits of it. Doesn't mean you legally have to be a Christian in order to be patriotic, for instance. But understand, and Adam said it best, our constitution was written for a more religious people and is totally unsuited to the government of any other.

[54 : 55] And it wasn't by accident. If you look at things like religious freedom, I got news for you. That's a Christian principle. Why? Well, because the one entity in the universe that could have compelled you by force and coercion to believe in him, to love him, and accept him, chose not to.

Exactly. Therefore, government should not, except for itself, authority that God didn't even assume for himself. Now, there's the words of a true Britannian. So, the answer is not to compel people to Christianity through the sword, but understand that Christianity is in what informed our founding.

And to try to exist apart from it, I think, is an experiment that we've been on for about the last 60 to 70 years, and it doesn't work. And so, at the same time that I would never dream of compelling anyone to be a Christian, I certainly hope Christians in this country understand that a core component of their patriotism must include, once again, fully embracing and living out their faith. plainly stated, and I think well stated as well. One more point of application here.

The point of being a citizen of heaven is not to despise earthly duties, but to be ambassadors of heaven here on earth. Certainly, my greater loyalty is to another kingdom, is to God Almighty, God above, who reigns and rules and takes precedent over anything any earthly kingdom can require of me.

[56 : 26] But yet, at the same time, we do have a responsibility to represent heaven here on earth. And that doesn't mean that we shirk earthly duties.

One more quote here. This is from Eric Reid, a pastor in Tennessee, middle son Caleb, who died a few years ago when he was 15 from complications from birth.

He went through it. But he's going to be referring to the dominion mandate from Genesis chapter 1 to be fruitful and multiply and to fill the earth and subdue it, have dominion over it.

He said this, My experience has been that most evangelicals operate with a default Gnosticism. Gnosticism is, I know something you don't know. It's just the Greek word for gnosko, for knowledge. I know something, you don't know it. And so evangelicals operate on this mindset. It's wrong. It's not biblical at all. It doesn't know what to do with a dominion mandate and elevates things like Bible study, personal quiet time, vocational ministry, missions, etc.

[57 : 31] over creating businesses, developing art, building wealth, pursuing political influence, and so on. God considers it all his work.

Because the latter portion of this list is a fulfilling of the dominion mandate. And so whatever your job is, whatever your career is, whatever you're building towards, whatever you're working towards, whatever you're acquiring, all of that is a part of the dominion mandate, and is godly in nature because you are a godly person doing it.

And there's nothing greater than, oh, let's all sit down and have a Bible study. That does not serve a higher purpose than you going to work and punching a time clock and earning a living and raising a family and all the things that you do.

Are they both important? I'm not saying that one is more important than the other. It's all a part of what we have been called to do as believers. So yes, don't hear this as your pastor saying, well, he doesn't think Bible study is important.

That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying that most evangelicals devalue the dominion mandate part of it, the every day I got to go to work part of it, and the only thing that God cares about is the Bible study and the missions and the ministry part of it.

[59:01] No. That also is, pick a word, bullocks or poppycock or baloney. Whatever you want to say about that.

So that is the Lord's and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it. It's all God's. It all belongs to him. So we're all called to do that.

We looked at this passage a few weeks ago, engage in business until I come. The Greek word here, pragmatic. The earthly business that we conduct is a part of what God's calling us to.

It is godly work because we make it godly. So whatever you do, and this is in the context of work, work heartily as for the Lord and not for men because you are serving the Lord Christ.

So when you go and you punch a time clock or when you go and you start your business and you're working, you might think that, well, I'm my own boss because I have my own business or I'm working for a boss and he's in charge.

[60:05] No, you're working for Christ in whatever context that you're in. You're serving him in the workplace. God has called us to that.

So this dichotomy of, well, you're not supposed to love the things of the world. Yeah, the things of the world that are evil and wicked. Yes, you're not supposed to love those things.

But remember, God created the world and he created a good place. And he gave us a mandate to take dominion, to subdue. And that's a part of what we do as believers as well.

You can't look at these commands. You're the salt of the earth, the light of the world.

Righteousness exalts a nation. Seek the welfare of the city. Pray for all the people, for all the kings.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Engage in business until I come. Listen, you can't look at these passages of Scripture and the tone of all of Scripture and conclude that we should not be involved in the things of this world.

[61:09] That's nonsense. Absolutely, you should care. That you should invest in what's happening in your community, what's happening in your state, what's happening in your country.

And you should seek its welfare. That means you participate. You get involved in the discussion. You contribute. This is the least that we can do.

And you vote. I would say if you're looking for the very bottom line, what's the least that I can do? Because sometimes we're built that way, right?

I'm not agreeing with that strategy. But the least that we can do is vote. And if you're going to vote, inform yourself. My goodness. But absolutely be involved in the world that God has placed you in, in the city, in the country that God has placed you in.

Absolutely. Let's pray. Lord, thank you. Thank you for all that you have given to us. You have given us a nation that began in such a way as to honor you, to seek your face, to seek your blessing, to make sure that they were doing everything right according to Scripture.

[62:40] and they set it up in such a way as to honor you, knowing that your hand of blessing would be upon them if they did it that way.

And boy, has it been. But Lord, in these recent decades, we have wandered far from you as a nation.

I pray that as believers that we would be salt and be light in the world around us. And yes, Lord, that we would represent the gospel well.

Absolutely. We want to see people come to faith in Christ. People's lives changed. Families, marriages changed.

And Lord, we want to see our nation changed as well. We want to see repentance and faith.

[63:47] And may that be true for us as well. May we be the kind of believers, Lord, that others would look at and say, I see Jesus. Lord, help us to take a stand for what is right.

Help us to recognize what's happening in our world around us. And to be aware. And to be involved. So again, Lord, we love you.

Help us to live for you in all that we do. In Jesus' name, amen.