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Vol. 24 No. 5

"From the Pastor's Desk..."

May 2016

LOOKING FOR THE IDEAL LEADERSHIP

From my early childhood we Americans have always been pre-occupied around this time of the year prior to the national election of our President as to who would be the best person for the job. We have always looked for the ideal candidate that could represent the party of our choice to lead our nation.

I was rather shocked when I learned from my parents, when Dwight Eisenhower was running for the office, that my folks revealed they were Democrats and were considering voting for the man that represented their favorite party. Of course I was curious as to the reason. You see I was one of them at the time who wore the button, "I like Ike."

They were happy to point out that their family came from the south, and had voted for Franklin Delano Roosevelt, commonly known as FDR, who became quite an American statesman and political leader who served as the President of the United States from 1933 to 1945. So they naturally assumed that if Mr. Roosevelt was a good President why not stay with the party that helped propel him into office.

It seems every time we Americans have come up with a winner or what we consider our ideal, we naturally assume that the man that follows him will also do a great job as well. And if the leader of the nation fails to serve the country well, we tend to change our political affiliation and seek the ideal leadership in another party. Apparently this is what is happening right now when so many Americans are frustrated with what is happening in Washington for the past few years that neither political party can depend on their previous voting constituents.

Let's face it; this year both parties in their eagerness to hold on to power, have been relatively shaken to the core and are working diligently to take over the selection of the process by appointing their own delegates for their up and coming conventions to insure their favorite candidates name is on the ballot in November. I don't know what these parties would do if the Americans would write on their ballot "*none of the above.*" I am sure it would put both parties in a state of panic.

In no way would I use this newsletter to endorse a candidate for any political office. First of all I believe that should be a private matter. Secondly, I am probably about as confused as to whom I will vote for as you are. One day I have feeling towards a candidate, then I read something that raises some questions and then I start looking at another candidate. I definitely know who I will not vote for, but that is not the question.

The question is who is it that I feel will be the best of the candidates that are in the running...this kind of thing requires much prayer, studying, and patience. Even after we vote, we probably will not be sure if we did the right thing because sometimes a candidate will say one thing and do the opposite after he/she is elected. Which raises the question as to whom can be counted on to be faithful to their beliefs and do those beliefs agree with ours as Christians and what is best for the nation? Have they been consistent in the past or are they wishy-washy in their decision making?

Our nation has been most fortunate to have some great men in the White House and the Oval office over it more than 200 plus years of its history. While many of these men had different points of view as to how the nation should be governed at the time they became the ideal leaders over the space of time. Abraham Lincoln, for me, gave to our nation principles which have stood the test of time and I believe should be remembered as the ideal President. There are others which I could name, but for lack of space and time will not do so in this newsletter. But that does not mean he was the only one.

WHAT SHOULD WE BE LOOKING FOR IN A LEADER

“One of the principles of leadership, when choosing between Image and Substance, we must always choose substance.” James Garlow, “The Laws of Leadership”

So, *what should we be looking for in a leader?* Should we expect him/her to be religious? If so how religious? What religion do we prefer and what religion do we not prefer?

Do we want him/her to be married? Is there a problem if there has been a divorce? Are we looking for his leadership to restore the nation economically, morally, and emotionally? Do we want him/her to be involved in some of the world crises? Do we want our President to be more occupied with things here at home? Do we want our military to be strong? Is there a concern about our National Debt, Social Security, and Healthcare?

Are we expecting too much out of our President? Should Congress take a more active role in how our nation is run? Should the President set the agenda as to what problems the government needs to address and then make his/her recommendations as to how to resolve them? These type of questions I believe should be considered when making a choice for leadership.

Too often we expect our leaders to be miracle workers. We want them to take office and immediately get the job done-for that is why we have elected them. The problem is that is not how it works. Our leaders must contend with the media who also have an agenda who have more access to the public than the President does. Then there will always be the opposition party that will seldom agree with whoever is in office. Now with this there are various organizations with money who also have an agenda and they too tend to bring pressure on the leader of our nation who is supposed to represent all citizens.

The President always represents our nation around the world. The world governments are far more diverse than even our people within our nation. Not every nation believes in democracy, prosperity of its citizens, and freedom of speech. The evil influence around the world is one that the leader of our nation must deal with, reason with, and use his influence to provide greater freedom for the people of the world.

All of the above should tell us whoever we elect needs our prayers as we are told in the Holy Scriptures. It was in the Apostle Paul’s letter to Timothy when he wrote:

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:2-4

There is another thing that we should consider and that is what the Holy Scriptures says about government. *“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”* Romans 13:1 NIV. Therefore, as Christians we need at all times to show our respect for whoever is in office. We may not ever agree with them politically but when they hold such an office we must show respect to the person that holds that office. Such respect will enable Christians to have more influence on the people that hold that office than those who claim they voted for that particular person.

*Let it be said of us Christians, especially in the years that come, what Pilate said of Christ, the man that rendered the judgment of crucifixion; he said of the Christ, “**I find no fault in Him.**”* This was said of a man who was falsely accused, maligned, miss-quoted, striped and beaten by the soldiers, etc. Yet Christ’s behavior was so perfect that even Pilate could find no fault in Him.

Of late many of our Christian brethren have got involved in the political process. I understand their reasoning due to the abortion issue, same-sex marriage, transgender bathrooms, the economy, etc. But nevertheless we need the wisdom of God in how to address these issues while at the same time still doing our mission in reaching the lost for Jesus Christ. In the meantime, let us start dealing with these issues down on our knees in prayer so that we may lead a peaceable life in godliness and honesty.

Amen.