

Church news

God reflects on our citizenship and christianity

Sunday school lesson

CITIZENS OF TWO KINDOMS (Read Romans 13)

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." (Romans 13:10)

Let us begin today's study with a question. How are we Christians to conduct our lives, being loyal to both our civil government and to our heavenly government? Paul is about to tell us in this passage of Scripture given for today's study. Jesus had something to say on the subject also. In answer to a question, He said, "Render unto Caesar (Roman Government) that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's." Paul was addressing the subject because the people to whom he was writing

were living under an emperor. No doubt, many things the Roman authorities did, or permitted to be done, were at least distasteful to the earnest followers of Jesus. Many of the early Christians were slaves and perhaps their treatment caused them to wonder. The citizens of the Roman Government had little, if anything, to say in the selection of their leaders, or the laws of the land.

On the other hand, citizens of a democratic society have the opportunity to select their leaders—and exercise some control over civil affairs. Our responsibility then, is much heavier and our accountability to God more concise.

THE CHRISTIAN AND GOVERNMENT (Romans 13:1-7)

"Let every soul be subject until the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (Romans 13:1) I have heard it said many times, "I don't mix my religion and my politics." There is something askew about that statement because the Scriptures teach that Christianity is to permeate all areas of our lives. It should guide our political thought. In these verses Paul is setting forth the Christian principal which should guide one's relationship with civil government. Civil government exists by permission of God; it is in fact

God ordained. That does not mean that God selects every leader of governments—that leaders rule by divine selection and ordination. God does not sanction evil, nor does He approve evil practices of persons who occupy high positions in government and civil law so that people might live in an orderly society. Without it there would be chaos. Paul is saying that we are subject to, and should obey the laws, of our civil government.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT. (Romans 13:8-10)

"Owe no man anything, but to live one another—(Verse 8)
How are we to read this verse of

Scripture? Are we to have no debts of any kind? This is not an injunction against indebtedness of any kind. To live is to have certain monthly bills, such as utilities. The thrust of Paul's admonition is that one should pay all just debts when due; to faithfully meet one's financial obligations. Paul makes one exception. It is the debt of love, to both Christ and our fellowman. It is a permanent obligation that rests upon every Christian. We owe Christ everything for His death in our behalf—all we have and all we shall ever have. One one occasion Jesus, in discussing the love of God and the love of a neighbor, said, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

THE CALL TO THE COMMITTED (Romans 13:11-14)

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep..." (Verse 11)

Paul has just addressed the question of Christians and their civil government. From this he moves directly to call Christians into active service for the Lord. Aware of how easy it is to become drowsy in our Christian living, Paul urges Christians to wake up, and to work for the Master while there is yet time to fulfill the duties given to us.

Yes, Christians are to obey both civil laws and God's kingdom requirements.

FunFair event to be held

The NC Democratic Party will hold its biggest event ever at the FunFair on September 12, Democratic Party chairman Jim Van Hecke said at Party Headquarters last week. Inspired by Senator Terry Sanford, FunFair is a day-long event combining issue forums and entertainment. FunFair will be held at Market Square in High Point, on Saturday, September 12.

Several issue forums will feature presidential and state-wide candidates. Senator Albert Gore, Jr., from Tennessee and Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts are among those attending. Van Hecke said that his staff is talking with the other presidential hopefuls. Democratic members of the congressional delegation will also participate in the event.

"We're expecting a large crowd of Democrats to gather for this showcase of our candidates," Van Hecke said. "With Super Tuesday only six months away, our state primaries eight months away, FunFair is a great opportunity to meet the winning ticket."

A diverse group of entertainers will perform throughout the day. Nationally known entertainers are scheduled as well as North Carolina stars. A flea market with wares from across the state will be located in various areas of Market Square. A wide array of North Carolina food will also be available from food booths.

Also on Saturday, the Democratic Party motion picture will premiere. The 15-minute film, produced by North Carolina filmmaker Grady Jefferys, will feature footage from historical archives, contemporary film clips and comments from a cross-section of Democrats. The film will be used across the state to boost recruitment drives and organization efforts.

"We're proud of North Carolina's Democratic Party and we want to remind people how our state has grown under Democratic leadership," Van Hecke said.

Tickets for the FunFair are \$2.00 per person and are available from both county and state headquarters. Facilities for the press will be available. For more information call 919-821-2777.



Perquimans Band Boosters Sell calendars

Calendar events

Perquimans Band boosters are now sponsoring their annual "Birthday Calendar" sales. Orders will be taken for calendars at the price of \$3.50 each plus 50 cent for each listing. We are asking all citizens to

please support us in this fund raising effort. All proceeds will go to differ the costs of new uniforms. For more information please contact Ginger O'Neal at 426-5117 or Carlyn Brown at 426-7964.

Correction

In the Aug. 13th edition of The Perquimans Weekly under the Cards of Thanks the name Billie H. Proctor was printed incorrectly. It should have read Belle N. Proctor. We regret the error.

Joe's Place
Lunch Buffet...\$3.50
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Church news

Piney Woods

Revival services will be held at Piney Woods Friends Meeting August 24, through Aug. 30, 1987. Services will be held each night at 8:00 p.m. with the Sunday morning service at 11:00 a.m. The visiting evangelist, Leslie Winslow, formerly of Up River Community will be holding services.

New Bethel

Annual Men's Day services will be observed at New Bethel Baptist Church of Hertford, N.C. on Sunday, Aug. 23 at 11:30 a.m. The speaker will be the Rev. Oscar Butts, Associate Minister of New Sawyer's Creek Baptist Church of Camden, N.C. The public is invited to attend.

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Dear friends,



In the absence of prearrangement, the next of kin alone has the right to choose the funeral director to decide the funeral arrangements. No one should attempt to influence or usurp this right of choice. Advice should be given only when asked, as the selection of a funeral director is a very personal matter.

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"The People Called Methodists"

Rev. Larry Higgins
New Hope—Woodland United Methodist Charge

As of this past Tuesday, the official observance of the 400th Anniversary of the founding of America came to an end. This anniversary has covered a period of four years, with many events taking place in Perquimans County. One of the annual events were to celebrate our religious heritage with four denominations conducting the services in the order of their settling in the county.

These religious celebrations were held by the Friends (Quakers), Episcopal, Baptist, with the Churches of the Methodist's family coming together at New Hope United Methodist Church last Sunday to celebrate the heritage that we as Methodist's people have enjoyed, as well as to express our Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the opportunity to offer a Christian witness in Perquimans County. Joining the United Methodist Churches were A.M.E. Zion and Wesleyan Churches.

Who are these people called Methodists, and what do they believe? There is not enough space to fully answer these questions, but let us briefly reflect on them.

The founder of the Methodist Church was John Wesley. It was not his intention to organize a new church (denomination) but to have a renewal movement within the Church of England, only to find the doors being closed to Him and his followers. Nevertheless, John Wesley remained a loyal ordained minister of the Church of England until his death. The Methodists in England did not organize into a church until after his death, but the Methodist's people who were moving to the 13 colonies found themselves organizing a church to meet the needs of people wherever they may be found, at that time from the coast to the wilderness. Ordained ministers and lay preachers met on December 24, 1784 at Lovely Lane Meeting House to organize the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Francis Asbury, a founding Bishop of their new Church found his way to Perquimans County in 1783 where he preached in Hertford and 1799 and 1804 he came to Durant Neck (New Hope) where he preached again. According to records, there was a Methodist congregation at Durant Neck a few years before land was deeded to the church in 1809. Thus, New Hope United Methodist Church is the oldest Methodist Congregation in Perquimans County, and worshiped in the oldest church building in continuous use in the North Carolina Conference.

John Wesley never professed to discover new truths, but to restore the old faith. Let us look at a few doctrines that John Wesley preached.

Wesley preached that not only must a person be saved to have a relationship with God, but that they can be saved. Jesus Christ gave himself on the cross of Calvary for the sins of every man, woman, boy and girl. Therefore, salvation is a gift from God to whoever accept it by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Wesley preached that a person can know that they have a relationship with God, through Christ. An individual, Wesley believed he did not have to live in wonder or doubt about if they had a relationship with God. They could receive the assurance of their salvation through the witness of the Holy Spirit. romans 8:15-16a - "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption when we cry, 'Abba! Father!' It is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

Wesley preached the doctrine of sanctification. Sanctification is the process of being entirely devoted to God. Romans 6:19-20 - Paul said "I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so yield your members to righteousness for sanctification." Wesley believed that if a person has faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour - if a person had the inner assurance that they are in relations with God - then they must be influenced to live a life holy and conformed unto the Lord and to their fellowman. This doctrine does not mean that a Christian will be sinless, but it does mean that as Christians, our deepest desire will be to please God. Thus, John Wesley emphasized time and time again that a Methodist Christian would be one who loved the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and love others as they love themselves. As members of the Methodists family we are proud of our heritage in this county, as we sought in the past, and will continue to seek in the presence and future to be open to the leadership of God that we may truly be his witnesses as well as his servants. AMEN

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