

Election 2016 in Biblical Perspective
“What’s Next in Response to the Election of 2016?”
I Timothy 2:1–2
Dr. Harry L. Reeder III
November 13, 2016 – Evening sermon

I did have two different sermons based on which way the election went. If it had gone the way most thought it would go my great concern was that God’s people would languish in despair and discouragement and not see that the Lord their God is sovereign. Those who are over us are appointed by Him in ways perhaps we have never known and we are supposed to cease these moments by ascending to the throne of grace in prayer for those who rule over us and descending from the throne of grace into the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that perhaps has not been visited in our nation before.

Then if the election went the other way which is the way that it ended up going I had an even bigger concern in terms of the church. My concern is the awakened interest in matters of the public square and public theology and the needs of our nation that I have seen evidenced among evangelicals that it would subside into thinking that we won the election and must still be in the ascendancy in this country, thinking that Biblical Christianity is holding sway in this country. I’m hoping I don’t get people too upset with me in this study although I may but I do not believe this election reveals that Biblical Christianity is in the ascendancy in this country by any means.

I believe that Biblical Christianity is the minority report and not the majority report in our society. I think a number of things came together that brought about the election results and I think it would be a drastic mistake for any church or any Christian to think that this election was a referendum on a Biblical world and life view or the Kingdom of God or the work of the Gospel of the Kingdom. This is something else and I have spent quite a bit of time in prayer asking God for some wisdom from above to try to understand why He has done what He has done in this election. I do believe the outcome of elections are by the hand of God working through the means of a democracy. God is not at the disposal of democracy but democracy is at the disposal of sovereign God who appoints the rulers throughout the world, including this nation.

On the one hand both sermons were very much alike in terms for the marching orders for the church but on the other hand there was some difference in terms of how to help God’s people navigate the outcome of the election and how to see it. In the study before this I laid out a five-fold paradigm process of who to vote for. To brief mention them they were character (of individual), content (personally and party platform), competency (to lead in statecraft in a nation), colleagues (who they surrounded themselves with) and convictions (what is the core of their convictions that usually send you back to their character).

Without character you can’t be sure anyone will carry out any of their content of policies. Without character they use their competencies for manipulation of people rather than encouragement of people. Without character you don’t even listen to your colleagues and without character you have not core convictions except what is best for you. So I fully affirm that character is number one on any leader, whether it’s a family leader, state leader or church leader. That is why in the Bible 15 out of the 17 characteristics of an elder deal with matters of character.

I believe the two main candidates we had in this election were not two candidates that put us on the precipice of God's judgment but the two candidates we received through the process of this nation revealed a nation under God's judgment. We weren't necessarily getting the leaders we needed in terms of their past record and presentations and not simply the leaders that we deserved but we were actually getting the leaders that this culture wants. We have a culture that is utterly devoted to reality TV voyeurism. Therefore it does not shock me that a reality celebrity star would be a leader. We have a society that has lost its moral being so it doesn't astound me that we have a candidate who is clearly susceptible to bribes, partiality, deceit, lying and corruption as well as embracing policies that are nothing more than a holocaust of the defenseless, unborn, newly born and those at the end of life, and also a candidate that would tell the church of Jesus Christ that your view of sexuality from the Word of God must change if you want to freely exercise religion in this society. We are getting what the culture desires and wants and it stood before us in stark reality.

That doesn't mean we don't go through the process of trying to decide on voting. Not voting is a vote and I don't think it's immoral not to vote but I do think it's bad stewardship not to vote. Amazingly evangelicals turned out in record numbers to vote in this past election. So why did they vote the way that they did? In the last study I laid out five issues of what I believe is at the forefront of what is facing our culture today. In this study I still believe those five issues are still before this culture and I don't think it has changed at all based on the results of this election.

What were the five issues? One, was the rule of law which is a constitutional government. It is a government by covenant in which the covenant constitution of the church is the rule of law or we would say our constitution affirms the three branches of our nation and the three branches of our government are at stake in our culture today. Will we have a judiciary that judicates law or attempts to make law? Will we have legislators who embrace their responsibilities even if it costs them the next election in order to make law and use the power of the purse and have the courage to do so if there is a runaway executive branch? Will we have an executive branch that is imperial or one that sees its responsibility to execute the law and not create its own law, dare I quote our previous president who said 'by a pen and a phone call'? The job is to execute the law as it is given. The judicial branch is to judicate law and not make law. The legislative branch is to make law and then to enact law that which is consistent with the constitution. I believe this issue is still at stake and before our nation at this point in time.

Secondly, are the issues of the creation sanctities of a culture where no culture can stand if these sanctities are removed. They are foundational. One is marriage where it is one man, one woman for life, a covenantal, monogamous, heterosexual, conjugal union before God which issues forth into the sanctity of family. A family is responsible for its children to raise them with parental oversight and if possible with a father and a mother. It needs masculinity and femininity for proper parenting. If it is a single parent then the church steps in to supply everything it can to help. It doesn't mean we remake the Biblical norm but it means that when sin has broken down such a situation as the family structure in a society by either death or divorce then the church steps in to make the best redemptive statements that it can but we still aim at producing Godly marriages and families as a creation ordinance. Thirdly, is Biblical sexuality which is a gift from God to initiate, recreate and procreate a marriage and any other sexual activity is sin against God and brings its own judgments. The marriage bed God honors. All adultery and fornication outside of that God will bring judgment upon and it brings its own judgments even in its very practice. Then there is the sanctity of liberty governed by law. It is

not liberty alone for that is anarchy but liberty governed by law so that you have both form and freedom within the context of a nation.

The third issue was the bill of rights that affirms the unalienable rights. The unalienable rights are the rights that God has given to us. There are enumerated in the Declaration of Independence which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is not the guarantee of happiness but it the right to pursue happiness within the context of law. If the government takes these away it is a fabrication. People may suffer because of governmental oppression but they are unalienable, God-given and they belong to the individual made in the image of God. The government's job is not to say that it gives liberties but its job is to protect those liberties of unalienable rights which was the genius of our bill of rights and the first amendment with its six affirmations of freedom, most notably free speech, free press, and the free exercise of religion. It is not the free freedom to worship for that is subset of the free exercise of religion.

The fourth issue was to say 'no' to cultural Marxism which is a political strategy to bring division to a nation and bring hopelessness through division in a nation. It is putting the rich against the poor, the haves against the have-nots, the blacks against the whites, etc. In that effort to bring division then there is always an answer to that division. The answer is not a government under God but a government that says 'we're god and we can handle this for you.' That is why state-ists are those committed to supremacy of state-ism where the state is in its own function and the state desiring to be god and not under god. Cultural Marxism creates the environment whereby the state expands its power, authority and reach.

The fifth issue is the immoral national debt that my generation, the boomers, have embraced, enabled, coddled and refused to deal with, thereby putting future generations in slavery to our indebtedness. I'm not even looking at that as a political, economic issue but as a moral issue that we do not saddle coming generations with a debt they cannot pay and a removal of any hope in their lifestyle except to pay off our lifestyle that we put them in debt to keep. I'm sure there a more issues but these issues are definitely before us. Now let's look at our text for this study in I Timothy 2.

I Timothy 2:1-2 says *[1] First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, [2] for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.* Why do we pray for leaders over us? We pray for them to have both the character and wisdom to accomplish either through redeeming grace or common grace that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life. So that the people they rule over can live godly and dignified lives in every way. This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior.

The role of government is to provide a nation that is secure in which peace reigns and dignity and respect to all citizens is extended and the freedom to exercise religion before God. The government doesn't pick and choose the religion but its job is to protect that free exercise of religion. Given the two candidates that were before us – their history, character, their policies – believers are going to have to be gracious to one another where they will have to give liberty for people to work their way through this.

Most of the time in the history of this country the platform between the two major parties is pretty much clear where believers in a world and life view would fall in light of what they see the role of the state to be and accomplish and one could pretty well draw a line to the candidate of that party. I don't believe it has been the case in this last election. On one side of the ledger the candidate and platform matched up but on the other side the candidate and the

platform did not match up. Therefore you go from character to the issues of content, competencies, colleagues and all of that and work your way through it. We should give the liberty and patience for people to do that.

I have been very disappointed in this last week. It has been made statistically evident that evangelicals voted overwhelmingly for the winner of the election, Donald Trump. So why am I ashamed? I'm ashamed of a number of those evangelicals who are trying to shame those who cast that vote. I have even had conversations with some of them. I want to ask them if they would still be shaming evangelicals who had voted the other way for someone by policy is going to kill more than 1.5 million babies and will make you celebrate it, pay for it and that there will be no free practice of religion and children will have to change their view of Biblical sexuality? I was arguing for people to have the liberty and what I'm ashamed of is the fact that you're trying to shame people who made their votes. I think what all need to do now is to try and understand God's providence in what He has done.

People want to know why evangelicals voted for a highly flawed candidate. I don't claim any infallible knowledge but I will give you the fruit in my prayer life and asking God for wisdom. I think this election has had two previous elections most like it. The vitriol in this election between the two candidates is pretty much unmatched in presidential elections except for the election between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. What they said about each other, to each other and what was being said was pretty extraordinary even if you take what was said in this election and compare it to that one. So this wasn't new.

I believe the only thing comparable to this election was the election of Andrew Jackson. There was a populist candidate running on a populist platform of national significance by a man who was known to be successful in his endeavors as a plantation owner and as a military general. He was also a very highly flawed man, a profane man. I do actually think he was converted by the witness of his wife and praise the Lord that happens more than we know. But he was elected and I think we are still paying the price for some very bad policy decisions he made but it was a populous movement. So here in this present election we have a highly flawed man, profane in much of his conduct in the past and even in the midst of this campaign.

Why is it that so many Christians would vote for him? More Christians voted for him than voted in the last three elections, in terms of Republican candidates. There were three statistics that I am grateful I was able to uncover that I think is the answer to this. These groups were people who had voted in this election. The first statistic is that there were 29 percent of those who voted who said they did not believe that either candidate was trustworthy for the office of president. I'm talking about of those that voted. Of that 29 percent 67 percent voted for Donald Trump. Secondly there was another group of people where 33 percent that neither candidate was competent to be president in this day and time and of that group over 70 percent voted for Donald Trump. Another group of people which encompassed 60 percent said that government had become too intrusive and expensive. Out of that group almost 80 percent voted for Donald Trump.

In other words, here is what is interesting about that. There was a populous candidate who was flawed and then there was a significant number of constitutional conservatives and evangelical Christians who ended up voting. I believe those evangelical Christians and constitutional conservatives are found in those three statistics. They saw an expansive government and they had to make a choice as to which one would further an expansive government or which one would stop it. They didn't believe either was competent so they had to make a choice so they worked through content, colleagues etc. They didn't believe either was

trustworthy and had to figure which one would be their best shot. I do think people vote for the lesser of two evils in situations like this and I've done that in every election of my life. Everyone I've ever voted for is flawed and some are better than they are evil by God's grace, either redeeming or common but I've never voted for a perfect candidate.

There is only one Ruler who is perfect and He does not need my vote. He is an elected and in fact I was elected because He is sovereign and is already in place as Prophet, Priest and King. I know Charles Spurgeon said 'a vote for the lesser of two evils is still evil' but with all due respect he not only got baptism wrong but he got that wrong also. I appreciate Mr. Spurgeon on many accounts but I don't ever know a time I haven't voted for the lesser of two evils to some degree. I believe that is exactly what took place and that it was all under the sovereign hand of Providence.

So why did these constitutional conservatives and evangelical Christians come together for this election? It was a runaway in electoral votes but lost in the majority or plurality vote. I want to give you a few thoughts on this election as to why this happened. First, this election nor the president elect are not the solution to the five issues that I just gave you. You are the solution. I have no confidence that this president and this election will solve those five issues. In fact, I don't even have time to bring to you the issues that this election surfaced aside from those five I've mentioned. You now have a growing number of states that embrace a culture of narcotic dissipation, affirm the destruction of life in the womb, just out of the womb and infanticide but now physician assisted suicide which will become an industry, just like the others have.

We have also seen that cultural Marxism has worked in our nation for we are highly divided and in desperate need of something virtuous that will rise up and take the hyphenation out of American so people begin to see there is a nation that has certain ideals and virtues even in its imperfections that is worth striving for. I put no confidence in this president and this election to do that. My confidence is in the Lord working through His people by the power of the Spirit of God with the Gospel of the Kingdom. That is my only place of hope in my nation. If Hillary Clinton had been elected I would be telling you the same thing.

What was I going to do the day after the election? It was the same thing I did on the day before the election. I might have to change some content but I will do the same thing. In a sense this election changed everything but in a sense it changes nothing in terms of God's great commission and great commandment to us as His people. If you in any way think this election is the answer to this nation's issues I would like to call you to some sobriety and repentance. It is not the solution or the answer. So what do I see about it?

I do believe this election is a providential open door for the church of Jesus Christ to get about its business without looking over its shoulder. I believe in the inexplicable kindness of God. This election offers some sensibility that the church of Jesus Christ can get about its business for the preeminence of Christ, reach the nations and begin with our own nation without having to possibly look over our shoulders. If the election had gone the other way then I am pretty well convinced I would still be about my business but I'm convinced there would have been a cost that we all would have been willing to pay. There is a possibility that cost will not have to be paid yet there still will be a cost in the culture.

If you believe those five issues are disappearing then you do not know the cultural elite of our society – the media, academia, politicians, entertainment industry and corporate America. Those issues are still their issues but what they don't have is now someone in the presidency that can bring fascists regulations to impose them. At least that is what it looks like they don't have

by God's grace. They have not given up and I can promise you the meetings began on the day after the election of how the rising of the state will succeed. A state that does not see itself under God has two enemies – the family and the church.

For those committed to state-ism, a socialist, fascist state of secular humanism that has not disappeared, therefore I believe an open door has happened that hopefully will give opportunity to restore sanity to the Supreme Court. Hopefully sanity will show up in our budgeting process so we quit sending our children and grandchildren into debt. Hopefully it will show up in regulations that do not allow people to exercise in free enterprise and to have competition. Hopefully we can go into these desecrated and desolated inner cities that have been utterly destroyed in the name of socialism, practically, personally and redemptively so that people will not only hear the Gospel but be given the opportunity for the sanctity of work, self-respect and the blessing of putting together families again that are whole and true. Therefore the next generation will now have systems where families now have access to education and make a difference in the lives of their children. My hope is that this door has opened those opportunities. While this election nor this president elect is the solution, this election and this president can possibly be a providential open door so that these issues and these other issues of the highly divisiveness we see all around us can be dealt with and we can begin to address the five issues I addressed earlier redemptively.

What do I believe the church needs to do? Here is what I believe and then I'll give you the takeaway. I have a Savior that commands us to do this and that is to pray. Praying is not the least you can do but the most you can do. It need not be the only thing you do nor the last thing you do but it should be the first thing you do and you should realize that it is the most important thing that you do. Right now I am praying for God's redeeming work to be at work in the life of President Obama. I know he has got some very deep disappointments. I know that President Obama has heard the Gospel. I am praying for Hillary Clinton. I know she has heard the Gospel. We have a couple in our church that has a ministry up there and I know she has heard the Gospel from his wife in her Bible study. I am praying for them and their conversion and their legacy is another issue and for the historians to talk about.

Then with sanity coming to the leadership of one of our major political parties we might not see the kind of wars we have seen politically. I know we'll always have competition for ideas and that's great but not the vitriol and the wars we've seen. I am praying for president elect Trump. I am praying for God's common grace to give him wisdom and the ability to do the next right thing in this nation in every decision. I recently heard a man talking about this who was in the office when Ronald Reagan was president and he said people don't realize that every morning when a president gets up he has anywhere from four to six life changing, earth shaking decisions to make. So the one of the most important things are these first nine people that are going to be with him in these daily meetings. I'm praying more than anything that the Holy Spirit whether He is invited or not will show up in those meetings to bring His kindness, grace and mercy but then I'm praying He'll be invited to the meetings. I'm praying God will save him from bad decisions and save his soul.

I probably shouldn't share this but I'm going to. I know others think Trump is already converted and I do hope it is true but I do know of his seeking which began at the 95th birthday of Billy Graham. Trump attended his birthday and there was a video titled 'My Hope' which Trump watched. According to one of my good friends on the team he told me that he filled out a card and wanted to talk to Billy's son Franklin about it. I'm not telling you he is converted but I am praying every day for his conversion and please don't try and manufacture things. Pray for

them and when they come you'll know it. When I was saved everybody knew it. When someone gets saved there are evidences of that salvation in their life.

Then I am praying for the church of Jesus Christ. I am praying for a heaven sent, Spirit granted, Gospel saturated, Christ exalting, sin killing, God glorifying revival to His church. This will be my heart all next year but it is already my heart. I am so grateful if we can have some sanity in the federal government even as I am encouraged by what is happening at state and local governments and I long for that but it's not what transforms a nation. A nation is transformed from the bottom up with the Gospel of Jesus Christ penetrating and permeating every village, town, city and county seat in which the church of Jesus Christ goes out and fulfills the Great Commission while embracing the Great Commandment. A Gospel awakening is what I long for to be in this nation but a Gospel awakening comes through the church of Jesus Christ. We are in need of a revival. We are not positioned. We are Biblically illiterate. We're spiritually impotent. Watch how much the church after this election will say 'won that one' and then disappear.

I am asking God to give that revival to me in my own personal life but I'm praying for that heaven sent revival because when that comes people begin to embrace a Christian mind from a Christian heart and ends up with a Christian life. It is not by memorizing seven things that I do or don't but by thinking through life with a heart and passion for Christ because they love the Lord with all their heart, soul and mind. Therefore the life for Christ begins to be lived out and that's what wins this world to Christ and this nation to Christ. That is what I long to see, what I'm looking for and what I'm praying for.

I'm praying for that kind of revival so that God's people know how to speak to the issues. We won't be a part of the cultural Marxism but we're going to love people with the truth and truth people with the love that Christ has given to us. We will not bow to the destruction of life or the deconstruction of marriage. We're going to work for public policy but in the church of Jesus Christ we are going to disciple young men and women so that their marriages and families are different so that people will see that there is a better way by the grace of God. We will evangelize and disciple to help make marriages and families whole again. When they are broken they will see the love of God as people step in to help. They will see people who stand for a sexual ethic out of love to Christ and for all that are entrapped in the addictions of the falseness of sexual anarchy and the death it brings. We will bring them the love of Christ, not by accepting behavior that kills you but by accepting people and loving them with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have a nation that thinks they have to sacrifice their children and grandchildren in order to keep this lifestyle that is kind of like a sandcastle on the seashore that will wash away when we die but our children will be left with nothing and enslaved to other nations. We will show them families that live within their means and honor the Lord by working. When God gives them reward to their work they spend it with Biblical wisdom and give with generosity. I'm not saying there is not a place for debt in a Christian economy for I understand you can rent money like you can rent a house but it is not a people who will enslave themselves and their children to debt because of a lifestyle they think they have to have. They don't have to have it because Jesus is their life and therefore they are satisfied when He meets their needs because He is more than enough. If we begin to do this kind work in personal evangelism and discipleship and intercessory prayer so that we reclaim the Christian mind where people aren't building Christian theology through experience but builds a theology that interprets, informs and leads their experiences in life, then we will begin to be an instrument by God's grace.

We not only need a Gospel awakening but we have to have pulpits again without fear or favor or being obnoxious or arrogant in the name of truth and without being compromised in the name of love to preach and teach the whole counsel of God, who hold forth the faithful Word of Christ. I thank God for the seminaries that are doing it because we need what they will produce in these pulpits for those of us in it cannot stay here forever. So we need reformation that leads to revival that leads to a great awakening. Revival comes through preaching and praying. Heaven sent revivals cannot be manipulated but they do come through the means that God has ordained – through prayer, the Word and the right embracing and use of the sacraments in the church.

As revival comes worship no longer becomes about my entertainment but for God's praise. God, please grant us God-centered, God-pleasing worship. From that worship people will be scattered to do evangelism. One of the big growth church lies is that we're going to win the world by prostituting worship to be focused upon unbelievers to come in and get saved. I want people to bring their unsaved friends to church but you don't turn the world upside down with a Gospel awakening by how many people come to church but by what we do when we leave here. It is when we are scattered that we do personal evangelism, small group discipleship and then gathered God centered worship, then deeds that reflect the Gospel of love, mercy and justice in the lives of people. It is that scattered church that is fueled by the gathered church that is absorbed with the reverence and joy of the Lord when they worship welcoming any and all who come but going to find men and women to bring them to Christ when we leave. As that begins to happen then you have a reformation. It's no accident that the great awakening didn't take place in church buildings but in fields. That's where Edwards went and Whitfield went was to the fields. Then from the fields people begin to flock to the churches because the church had gone into the fields and into the lives of men and women to lead them to Christ. So here is my takeaway.

After the election and until Jesus comes the Lord's church is in need of a heaven sent revival to seek a Gospel awakening so that we can stay on message, on mission, and in ministry. I'll finish with the words of my dear brother Al Baker. As we pray for all in leadership start by praying that God would give us bold but humble leaders and preachers in the church who will hold fast the Word of God and proclaim the whole counsel of God being innocent of the blood of all men. We won't pray like that until we get a burden for it. It is protracted, persistent, heaven seeking prayer and you won't have that until you have a burden.

One Sunday I walked out of the church and saw a group of people. As I approached I saw my heart doctor on the ground with a fractured cranium and not breathing. I watched people flock to that moment to help. All these people with great skills were there and I was there. I held the doctor's legs up which was probably about the only thing I was qualified to do but I remember all the people doing what they were gifted to do in marvelous ways. I still stand amazed that a man lying flat who died four times in that courtyard, four hours later I was talking to him in the hospital. It's been so wonderful to see how God has used his life since then. I will never forget our single's pastor at the time on his knees with his arms reached up, joining the rest of us but going beyond any of us calling upon God to intervene. I will never forget a wife who has calling upon heaven to spare her husband.

Until we get a burden to pray like that I don't think revival is coming. I know God can send it anywhere, any way and at any time as He wants to but He sends revivals through people laying hold of the throne of grace that have an intolerable burden for it. John Knox put it this way; Give me Scotland or I die! I'm just being honest and right now I don't think we're there. I

think we're saying 'God give us the United States but by the way we would rather it not cost us too much.' Knox was willing to die if God would just bring the Gospel to his nation. We need that intolerable burden. I want to pray for that until Jesus comes or until he calls me home. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You for what we have seen Your providence do and we're grateful for it. We sense an open door but God we're not waiting for the president elect to walk through that open door or even the elected officials to walk through that open door and we certainly don't expect at this moment the cultural elite to walk through that door, who have a world and life view that they desire to promote as a religion. We will walk through that door to reach our president, our elected officials, corporate America, the media, academia, the politicians and tell the world to come to Christ for He is the Door to eternal life. God give us lives that in the name of attractiveness are never compromised but give us lives that in the name of thankfulness are never obnoxious. Help us to be people who are known by our love with an unflinching commitment to the truth and may the love of Christ saturate us. May the Word of God not only transform us but sound from us to the world. God, please bring that revival to me, to this nation with the Gospel from sea to shining sea for I pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Power Point

THE ISSUES

I. The Rule of Law

- Constitutional Government

II. The Sanctities of Culture

- Marriage
- Sexuality
- Family
- Life
- Liberty and Law

III. Bill of Rights

- Unalienable Rights

IV. No to Cultural Marxism and Yes to Rebirth of Vision

V. The Immoral National Debt

AN ANALYSIS

A PROGNOSIS

LIFE TAKEAWAY

On Wednesday and until Jesus Comes, our Lord's Church is in need of a Heaven-sent revival to seek a Gospel Awakening by staying: On Message—On Mission—In Ministry.