

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Love Your Nation

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

Exodus 20:12

Theme: Honor your Father in heaven by loving your nation on earth.

Introduction: In the providence of God, we just celebrated the semiquincentennial of our nation. There are many competing ideas as to how we should think about our nation, citizenship, and patriotism. In these tumultuous times, Christians need to have solid answers to these important questions so that we can think, feel, and act rightly in the roles and responsibilities assigned to us by God. We are Americans by the providence of God, and so we must seek to know what God expects of us in the land he has placed us.

There are three biblical steps that we can take toward being good citizens in this nation:

1. Honor your heavenly Father above all

- Theologians often speak of mankind in two categories: nature and grace.
- By nature, no one is exempt from honoring the only true God.
- Grace is a restoration of nature, undoing the fall and restoring our capacity to know and love God.
- Our allegiance and belonging to God is ultimate: there is none higher, not even nations.

2. Honor your parents in the Lord

- The obvious application of Exodus 20:12 is to honor our earthly parents, but the church has historically extended this principle to other human authorities and to God.
- We honor God by honoring rulers and leaders.
- Moreover, we love America best by loving God most.

3. Love your nation with a true piety

- There are five common false slogans used to confuse and disincentivize Christians from speaking and acting boldly in public.
 - "You cannot legislate morality"
 - In reality, all legislation is morality—you cannot help *but* legislate it.
 - "My kingdom is not of this world"
 - Christ's kingdom is not *from* this world, but it is *over* it.
 - "We lose down here"
 - We should believe that God is victorious and in control.
 - "Cultural Christianity is bad"
 - This fails to reckon with the alternatives to cultural Christianity.
 - "Jesus is neither a donkey nor an elephant"
 - This is a statement of moral equivalence, but the two major parties are not morally equivalent.

Questions:

1. Where do you see evidence of God's grace in our nation? Where do you see his judgment?
2. How does the commandment to honor father and mother extend and apply to other relationships in your life?
3. Which of the five false slogans have you heard before or used to believe?