

It Is Written

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Christians Are Not Revolutionaries

By Doy Moyer

Christians were told to honor and submit to governing authorities (Rom 13). Nowhere is there a caveat that says we must like or agree with whoever is in power before submitting. When we consider that some who became Emperors did so through questionable means, then the point should be even more solidified. There were murders, coups, and violent uprisings. Through it all, Christians were to stay focused on Christ and still submit to the governing authorities, however they got there. Nothing has changed for us.

Christians are not revolutionaries who will seek political control through violence. Christians will not try to subvert the powers through carnal means. We can talk about the integrity of the process. We can talk about the honesty or dishonesty of those involved, all the way from pollsters to the candidates. We can complain about how unfair things appear to be. None of that will change anything for the Christian. Our focus remains the same. Our goals are set. Christ and Him crucified is still what we preach. The kingdom of God remains unscathed.

It's difficult to trust the "system." It's frustrating. But it's also politics. In all my years I've not seen anything that would show me otherwise. Do I throw up my hands and say life is useless? May it never be!

More than trusting a system, I want to trust God. At the end of the day, whether I lived under corrupt Roman Emperors, evil communist dictators, or a democratic republic that can also be subject to corruption, my ultimate outcome is the same. If I have trusted God, then my eternal home is with Him. I want to help others have that same goal, and it is a goal that is far more secure than whether or not we'll ever be able to fix what's going on in this world.

"Now I know that the LORD saves His anointed; He will answer him from His holy heaven With the saving strength of His right hand. Some [trust] in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God. They have bowed down and fallen; But we have risen and stand upright. Save, LORD! May the King answer us when we call" (Psa 20:6-9).

Daughters of Bathsheba

By Jere E. Frost

The downfall of one of the greatest men of history is recorded in the eleventh chapter of Second Samuel. David is the man. He disgraced himself and dishonored his God, and the student of his life is saddened by the blackness that darkens his otherwise illustrious, admirable and righteous life. David sinned heinously in committing adultery with Bathsheba. He did not minimize it as a trivial matter ("it's just sex") and tried desperately, if not honorably, to hide his transgression.

But the point of this article is how it all began. After all, he had earlier been spoken of as "a man after God's own heart" (I Samuel 13:14). How this mighty man began his descent is simply told in 2 Samuel 11:1-2: "And it came to pass...at the time when kings go forth to battle that...David tarried still at Jerusalem. And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon."

First of all, he was not at his post of duty. Secondly, Bathsheba was bathing herself in a place where she could be seen. It matters little, as to the effect, whether she had it as her intention to attract David's eye or was simply thoughtless. Thirdly, David saw what he should not have seen, but did not turn away.

Bathsheba's immodesty was the trigger in David's downfall. No woman can claim innocence in the arousing of a man's baser passions when she has displayed her physical, fleshly form before his eyes. Even when a woman neither contemplates nor permits a consummation of lust, she can induce sin. Did not David sin

even as he looked? Truly, David sinned before he ever touched her. And regardless of her intentions and heart, whether evil or empty, her lack of discretion had a terrible effect.

We live in a generation where girls and women boldly appear in various stages of undress. The fact they do it knowing that there are eyes of lustful men watching, compounds their guilt. Perhaps Bathsheba could have argued that she did not know anyone was looking. But she who knows eyes are watching, whether it is at a pool, beach, or in a performance of some kind, is utterly without excuse if she exposes herself in virtual nudity. Bathing suits, short shorts and the like appeal to a man's baser nature and have caused many to lust. Needless to say, virtuous and modest women wear clothing consistent with the claim of virtue and godliness.

It has been said that if David could have seen the final result of his indulgence of lust that, since Bathsheba did not discreetly cover her body, he would have discreetly covered his eyes. "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issue of life" (Prov. 4:23).

Three Answers to One Question

By Robert F. Turner

Could one question be given three differing answers, and all answers be correct? Seems unlikely doesn't it? Yet this is the case in the N.T. book of Acts when the question, "What must I do?" (to be saved) is asked.

The expressed answer given to the Philippian jailer was "Believe!" (See Acts 16:25-34 for full account.) Some insist that this expressed reply is complete, and hence salvation is by faith only. However, a consideration of the expressed replies given this question on other occasions will show the fallacy of such reasoning.

When some of the Pentecost multitude asked, "What shall we do?" they were told, "Repent, and be baptized." (See Acts 2:6-38-f. for details.) And when Saul asked what to do he was directed to Ananias, who told him to "Arise, and be, baptized." (See Acts 9:1-18 22:6-16 for the record.)

If only the expressed reply is to be considered we would have to conclude that the jailer was saved by faith alone, and that those on Pentecost were saved by repentance and baptism (i.e., without any faith) and that Saul was saved by baptism alone--without either faith or repentance. Of course, none of these conclusions are valid.

Why Did The Answers Differ?

Because the questions were asked by people in different circumstances. A man in Burnet may ask how far is it to San Antonio?" and be told, "100 miles." In Marble Falls this question would get a different answer. And in Blanco, the same question would get a third, and different answer. Yet all would be part of one great truth.

There is no indication that the Philippian jailer had either knowledge or faith in the Christian system; so he was told to believe, and then "they spake unto him the word of the Lord." He repented, as indicated by washing their stripes; and he was baptized, as stated in Acts 16:38. Thus he truly believed (vs. 34).

But those on Pentecost heard the preaching of Christ before they asked their question. The preaching "pricked" their hearts; i.e., they believed. Then they were told "repent and be baptized."

And Saul (later called Paul) had already believed, and had spent three days penitently praying, when he was told, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."

Where Are You?

Your status or condition before God must be considered in answering your question, "What must I do?" The Lord will save "all who will obey" (Heb. 5:9) and has given one gospel to all (Gal. 1:8 Rom. 2:11). Have you proven your faith by full and complete obedience to His will?