

4 September 2009

Greetings from Tyler,

A flood of propaganda pours forth from every source of media, regardless of your preferred programming. A great deal of it is corporate advertising, attempting to convince the buying public that they are “green,” environmentally conscientious, and cooperative with the global community. Even the oil companies are playing that tune! So are the auto-makers, hotel chains, food companies, grocery distributors, soap sellers, you name it.

You just can't be cool, or for that matter socially acceptable in today's climate (no pun) unless you are prepared to accept, even promote the quasi-religious doctrines that have become mainstream conventional wisdom. Whether the subject is “climate change,” abortion, “gay” marriage, illegal immigration, constitutional rights for terrorists, government healthcare or the swine flu vaccine, people are beginning to get pretty emotional.

Emotional because most of these subjects transcend politics and impinge directly on parental rights, the prospects of survival of elderly parents, and into the realm of religious belief and practice. In the case of the huge dispute over the government plan to take over America's “healthcare,” for many it is literally a matter of life and death in the near term. Where is God in the whole discussion?

Certainly God has the power and ability to intervene in any situation. He also expects us to use the faculties He authored to help ourselves and each other. This nation has been lavished with blessings that He ordained and sustained. The Church of God has long recognized, as did our nation's forefathers, that divine inspiration was involved in the writing of our Declaration of Independence, our Constitution and Bill of Rights. To make such a statement today is surely regarded in the mainstream as a blasphemy of political correctness and new age dogma.

And lest we get too caught up with some of the personalities carrying water for one opinion or another, it might pay to realize that many of the disputes that are tearing at the nation's fabric have been in play for a very long time. But it is different this time, because a movement has taken hold that openly seeks to upend, or should I say “transform” basic tenets we held to be inviolable.

We've made the point many times before, my father before me, his father before him, and that is that it is not our place to encourage anyone to engage in political skirmishes. Each of us must ask God's guidance in practical matters that relate to our families and friends, and then do our best to provide for them amid whatever circumstances arise. Organizationally, we must keep God's Laws first and foremost so that we'll be found worthy of His mercy and protection in the times ahead.

Since we, as God's church, have been commissioned to witness and warn, we simply cannot hide our eyes to current developments even though there is the risk of offending

someone's political, social or religious sensibilities in the process. It is inevitable. Particularly in this environment, it's impossible to say what everybody wants to hear, and that's not our calling.

There are huge events yet to play out overseas, in Europe and in the Middle East. The EU is on record, begging Iran to come back to diplomatic negotiations even though years have already been wasted on lies and deception. The world's foremost instigator of terror has not changed its posture, but nuclear weapons in the hands of Iran's government leaders will change the world, who can deny it?

Bible prophecy tells us that a great political leader will emerge, ally himself with a great religious leader who will be worshipped, claiming to speak for God, claiming to be God. As we've seen in history, and in religion, when men take God's authority upon themselves, catastrophe is not far behind. In the final and ultimate example, there will be great tribulation resulting in Christ's return to make war with the nations and rule them with a rod of iron. How politically incorrect is that?

The Garner Ted Armstrong program this week received 328 with one hundred forty six first time contacts. Response to the monthly letters remains strong, and there is enormous appreciation for the GTA messages that we continue to add on CD and DVD. We thank all of you for your involvement and support.

Have a good and restful Sabbath.

Mark Armstrong