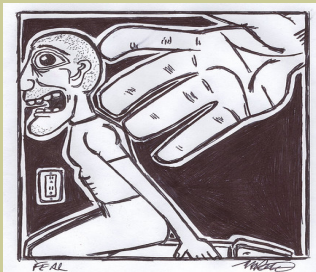


Bad News Blues



People say I have to know what's going on in the world. I say, "show me the verse." It's fascinating, but no one has yet shown me the verse. If there was such a verse, I am convinced I would have been shown it by now. I have not taken a newspaper in 49 years, and I'm now 49 years old. I don't understand how people can read newspapers and live to tell about it. Well, they generally don't live. They get cancer and die. It takes a little time to die of worry, but it happens eventually.

Reading newspapers is the very definition of minding things on the earth. It's like going to a restaurant and saying, "Give me your War Special and a side order of Worry. For dessert, I would like a large Plane Crash and a Communist Coup."

How can you expect peace when you order an entrée of War? I am not even mentioning the 11 o'clock news, but don't get me started. Oh, it's too late. "Honey. Turn on the news. Let's watch colorful, hi-definition accounts of kidnappings, rapes, racial discord, house fires, and tsunamis in faraway places."

"Okay, honey. Then what?"

"We'll sleep like babies!"



Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

"If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong" --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

Subjection to evil government; sorry

Chapter headings, verse numbers, and paragraphs are not part of inspired Scripture, but were added later so that people at sporting events could write "John 3:16" on large signs. Does Paul all of a sudden start talking about government in the so-called first verse of the so-called thirteenth chapter of Romans, or is this only the continuation of a theme he began in the so-called twelfth chapter? The answer may very well irritate you at first, but will ultimately bless you.

In the fourteenth verse of the twelfth of Romans, Paul embarks upon a litany of Christ-like characteristics that would surely mark one as His. Please note that these things are not in accord with the wisdom of the world, but, rather, with the wisdom of God. The world (which includes many



restless Christian political activists) believes these things to be quite foolish:

- bless those who are persecuting you: bless, and do not curse
- be mutually disposed to one another, not being disposed to that which is high, but being led away to the humble
- do not come to pass for prudent with yourselves
- to no one render evil for evil
- being at peace with all mankind, you are not avenging yourselves
- if your enemy should be hungering, give him the morsel, if thirsting, give him drink
- be not conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good
- let every soul be subject to the superior authorities

Did you see what I did? I snuck Romans 13:1 into the list of Christ-like virtues from Romans 12. But do you know what? *That's just where it belongs.* Romans 13:1-5 is not a separate treatise on government, but the continuation of the list of the Christ-like qualities of Romans, chapter 12 that mark true men and women of God.

(Continued on page 2)

Clanging Gong News presents WORLD'S SIMPLEST SPIRITUALITY TEST!

How easy is it for you to say: "Thank you, Lord, for the current condition of this country" (Phil. 4:6).

This concludes our test



Dees test!
Ees too hard!

...evil government



(continued from page 1)

These rare qualities of Romans 12 ought to fit seamlessly into our actions and attitudes toward the superior authorities of Romans 13. This

means blessing (not praying against) those who are raising our taxes; being disposed to the humble (the socially anonymous) rather than the high (political power brokers); *not* assuming the prudence to know which government best suits God's present purposes; *not* speaking ill of the authorities when they speak ill of us; *not* becoming agitated at the godless antics of godless men; *not* secretly plotting the overthrow of bad government; and *not* being content until having

sent our political adversaries a tin of homemade cookies and, at the same time, promising to shut up and leave them alone—unless it is to bless or feed them. ■

Cleaning the wrong house

“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My deputies, also, would have contended, lest I should be given up to the Jews. Yet now is My kingdom not hence” (John 18:36).

The Lord's kingdom was not of this world *then*, and neither is it now. When Peter picked up the sword in Gethsemane, Jesus rebuked him. Jesus would have rebuked any man then who would have fought to rescue Him. Such fighters would have sadly mistaken this present world system as the field of His reign. In spite of overwhelming scriptural testi-



mony, many today still think that His kingdom is of this world. Instead of trying to rescue Him from the Jews, they are trying to rescue Him from errant political forces. They are striving to make sure that He has a clean world system in which to establish His government. But He is not going to use this world system to establish His government. Again, His government is not of this world.

Political Christianity is doubly ignorant. Not only is it like the housewife who hurries to clean the house before the maid comes (why does she think the maid is coming?), but it is cleaning the wrong house. ■

Keeping the peace

If you feel called to it and are able to help bring about better government by either participation in the legal process or by voting, then do so. Only take care not to lose your peace. We, as believers, must walk the fine line between changing the world and losing our minds.

If you are able to change the world while staying calm and keeping your voice down, then do so. If not, then be free within the bondage of bad government; it's okay. Really. It's okay to not change the world. Wait for Christ.

It's okay to not change the world.

What a Revelation!

YOU CAN LIVE THE EVANGEL OF GOD'S GRACE IN THESE TROUBLING TIMES

Cease striving, and know that He is God. The answer to your struggle for righteousness is not in the works of man, it is not in the works of religion, and it is not in the halls of government. It is in the faith of Jesus Christ, Who justifies us gratuitously in His grace. Become the luminaries of the world, not by striving to defend your "rights," neither by becoming disposed to the politics of men, neither by wrestling with flesh and blood, but by becoming blameless and artless, living the evangel of the grace of God. Recognize that it is ultimately His hand ruling the affairs of men. Be invigorated by faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured that what He has promised, He is able to do also (Rom. 4:20-21). This faith, then, shall be reckoned to you for righteousness (Rom. 4:22).

Q&A

If Paul was subject to government, why was he flogged, imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and in constant dangers (2 Cor. 11:23-26)?

Paul was mistreated, not because he broke any laws, but because he, like his Lord, spoke and lived the truth. Generally (and I'm sure you have noticed this), the world hates truth.

Consider the case of our Lord. Was He ever insubordinate to the Jews or the Romans? No. Our Lord was sinless. He broke no law, be it Jewish or Roman. He said plainly in John 15:25, "They hate me gratuitously." The King James Version reads, "They hated me without a cause."

If our Lord had broken even one Jewish law, the Jews could not have hated Him gratuitously, that is, without a cause. The Jews and Romans hated Jesus *because* of His total submission. Should we expect Paul to be any different? As with the Lord, thus also with His slaves (Mt. 10:24-26).

Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur.
Therefore, I shall rant (Philippians 2:14).

I will kill you with a screwdriver

Historic Note: This is the first time Martin Zender and Adolph Hitler have ever appeared together in the same publication

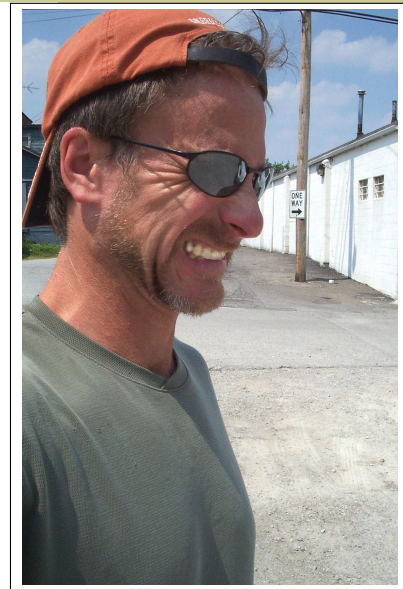


Human government is a two-headed snake. There are lesser evils among the great evil. The human spirit longs to live untrammelled. Along this line, I believe in small government. I don't like taxes—who does? I cannot understand penalizing achievers so that non-achievers can avoid work. It sounds like Communism.

I believe that government exists to preserve liberty. After that, it's dodgy. By that I mean that after government protects our life, liberty and pursuit of relative happiness (I added that "relative" in there; it's not in the Declaration of Independence), it should take a back seat and peel off constricting regulations. People like to be productive, but it's hard to work when you're wearing a strait jacket.

Concerning national defense, I am not so pie-in-the-sky to think that we should write national policy based on trust. I wish that we could, but the eon in which we live is naughty, not nice. It's a wicked eon (Gal. 1:4), and thus it is naïve for us to think that we can sit down and negotiate with sinister entities. Neville Chamberlain tried that with Hitler. Um, it didn't work. In a wicked eon, we need a strong military. I am proud of our soldiers, and so thankful for them.

I'm speaking of national policy now, and not the policy of individuals. I am not *personally* going to chase down evil dictators; I'm afraid I would catch one. But I think



it's good for our armed forces to do so; they *want* to catch them, and should. We must protect our homeland. If an evil dictator entered my literal house and threatened my family, I would stab him repeatedly with a screwdriver. (I don't own a gun. I'm all for gun-owning, I just don't like loud noises.)

An evil dictator striding through my kitchen is a microcosm of an army entering our fair land. It is a natural instinct to protect loved ones as long as it's not too noisy. And yet an individual believer may choose the path of non-resistance, which is the most excellent path.

But not necessarily the easiest. ■



CGN Quote of the Year

WHY THE WORLD BITES

This is my title, not the author's

"The era of the Gentiles has a purpose which is the opposite of that of the Kingdom of God. *Then*, God will display what He can do, through His own Anointed. *Now*, however, it is necessary to expose the futility and the incapacity and the failure of human government apart from the direct supervision of the Deity. Even men with the noblest motives, with extraordinary capacity and possessing brilliant minds, are hampered and frustrated in their attempts to give the people the plenty and the peace for which these men strive, for their efforts are out of season.

"Great as are the hardships and the calamities which come to earth's inhabitants because of the shortcomings of man's rule over man, it would be an infinitely greater calamity if men could succeed in ruling

perfectly apart from God. That would make them independent, self-centered, self-sufficient, so that God would become nothing to them, rather than their All. Just as it is necessary for a sinner to realize his need of a personal Savior, so it is essential that the nations learn their need of a political Savior. Let us thank God that, in His wisdom, He gives authority to men who are not able to use it ideally, yet, in due time, He will transfer it all to His Christ, the Only One Who is fully fitted to head the human race." —A.E. Knoch, *Concordant Studies in the Book of Daniel*