

December 2016

“I urge...that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for ... all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good and pleases God our Savior who wants all *humankind* to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NIV, adapted)

Like many of you, I have just participated in our country's process for electing individuals to represent us and govern us. We have a “representative” system of government. It's a good system, far from perfect, but a good system. Many systems of government prohibit its citizenry from giving any input. You get what you get based on who has conquered you last or who is next in the family bloodline. I'm glad to have some say in choosing who will represent me.

Even so, few of the people who I resonate most with as leaders chose to run in this presidential election cycle. The candidates who gave me the most hope and who made the most practical sense didn't make it out of the primaries. Such is the system we have. So I did my research and I listened. I engaged in concerted thought and I implored God for wisdom in daily prayer. I arrived at my decision, cast my vote and waited.

The process determined that the candidate whose ideas, character and experience I **least** resonate with won the election!

Truthfully, I'm very disappointed. But what to do next?

First, I remember that I am an imperfect person whose life was transformed when I met Jesus. His love, acceptance, forgiveness and grace changed me. His calling to follow him hasn't changed. Regardless of which country in which I live and under which system of government... Jesus is the One I answer to and serve...above...all...else.

Now what that means is that I'll wake up each morning determined to love God with every part of my being and determined to love my neighbor as I love myself. Loving my neighbor means that I will care enough to introduce them to the heart of God as revealed in Jesus and I'll do this with both my words and my actions. Loving my neighbor means that I will see them...really see them... and I will address their needs with compassion and dignity. It means I will work within the social, religious and political systems that exist to promote justice, mercy and hope.

Finally, and continually, I will do as the apostle Paul instructed Timothy in the scripture above. I will offer requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving for all those in authority that they will come to a saving knowledge of the truth of Christ. Please join me in doing this.

~ PASTOR TODD