

Our Mission: Bringing together an ecumenical coalition of Quad City area churches to help feed the hungry, offer emergency assistance to those in crisis, and provide a transitional housing program for women and children who are victims of domestic violence or human trafficking.

One Nation Under God?



Among the books in my study are eight or ten commentaries on the epistle to the Romans. All of them confirm the obvious meaning and force of these words of the Apostle Paul: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.... The powers that be are ordained of God” (13:1). Christians are to submit themselves to the civil authorities.

Someone will say, “What if these authorities are ungodly and require things of us that are contrary to the will of God?”

The answer is: a ruler could not be much more ungodly than Nero, the supreme head of state at the time Paul wrote these words.

One could indeed point to Peter and John, who were arrested in Jerusalem and commanded no longer to preach in the name of Jesus Christ, whereas Christ had commanded them to preach in his name. This was a direct conflict, and the disciples answered, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things ... we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19, 20).

But note carefully: in this case of direct conflict, they could do nothing else but obey God rather than men; yet they did not resist arrest, nor did they rally the disciples to try to overpower the authorities. It is occasionally necessary for a Christian to suffer for doing what is right. In such cases, he should go on and do the thing that God requires and accept punishment if it comes. In this way, he is being subject to the civil powers, even though he has put his allegiance to God first.

The occasional, very rare conflicts between the demands of the state and the commands of God must not be allowed to obscure the fact that the powers that be are ordained of God. Paul goes on to say, “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.”

One famous commentator writes: “There are indeed always some tumultuous spirits who believe that the kingdom of Christ cannot be sufficiently elevated, unless all earthly powers be abolished, and that they cannot enjoy the liberty given by him, except they shake off every yoke of subjection.” This an error. Let me identify the commentator lest it be assumed that this is a media spokesperson or liberal or conservative political or religious pundit speaking of recent lawless activities or reaction to court decisions. His name is John Calvin. Sometimes it is good to go back several hundred years, away from current controversies, to get a view of Scripture that cannot be colored by these present concerns.

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The Law of the Land

In essence, the thirteenth chapter of Romans is telling us that Christians are to obey the law of the land because it actually does, in general, approve what is orderly and disapprove what is wrong. Even the poorest governments do this. Moreover, even a Nero-type government is God's instrument to enforce lawful conduct. This is a hard pill for some (though not all) to swallow today, but not nearly so hard as it was for the Jews of Paul's day who were chafing under a Gentile tyranny.

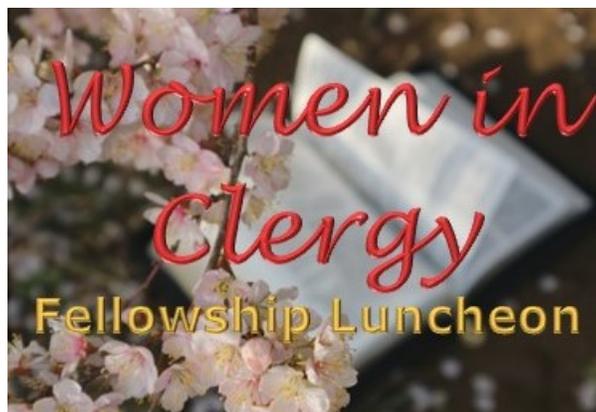
Today we must face the often-repeated question, "What is the law of the land?" It is a difficult question, a frighteningly up-to-date one, and one that must be solved. Jesus said, "If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand." In America, we have a kingdom divided against itself, and you and I are squarely in the middle of the clash. One voice says: The Constitution of the United States, with its associated documents, is the law of the land, and the Supreme Court of the United States is its interpreter. Another voice says: The Supreme Court has misinterpreted the Constitution, and the state will abide by what it deems to be a better interpretation of the Constitution.

We citizens are caught in the squeeze. Suppose we, as Christians, want to be subject unto the higher powers. Who are they? To which of the conflicting voices shall we listen? The Bible gives us some help: Paul directs Christians to submit to the supreme Roman officials—those who had the power of the sword and who collected taxes—rather than to the Jewish leaders. Almost everyone agrees that these are times of increasing tension, and that something needs to be done. At the same time, ironically, many people immediately criticize a person who tries to do something or even to say something directly on this subject.

In the August and September issues of "Faith Connections," we will continue to explore this subject "One Nation Under God?"

*Blessings,
Mel*

Women in Clergy Luncheon



The Women in Clergy Luncheon is back and we are so excited.

It will be Tuesday, August 16th at 11:30am at Culemans Hall at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Moline.

The speaker will be our Executive Director, Rev. Dr.

Melvin L. Grimes. Food will be provided by Lunardi's.

The event is free.

For more information and to RSVP, contact Laronda Bennett at lbennett@cuqca.org or call 563-332-5002.

Thank You



Thank you, Iowa Scottish Rite Masonic Foundation for generously donating to the ministries of Churches United.

Meal Site Groups Needed

The number of those in need being served at our meal site at Zion Lutheran Church in Davenport continues to grow. We urgently need groups to provide and serve meals.

For more information, contact our associate director, Betsy Vanausdeln at 563-332-5002 or by email at bvanausdeln@cuqca.org.



Pictured are members of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Davenport.

Gift Cards Needed to Help Shelter Clients



FAREWAY
MEAT & GROCERY

Bettendorf, Davenport, & Moline

Our clients often leave domestic abuse situations with very few possessions. Donations of gift cards allow our clients to purchase for themselves what they need to start rebuilding their lives.

If you would like to donate a gift card, please drop it off at our office or mail it to us.



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Give Today to Churches United

Online at <http://www.cuqca.org/donate.php>

Call us at (563) 332-5002

Mail or drop off your gift:
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Thank You!

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Food Pantry Coordinators Needed



Do you like helping people?

Our food pantry coordinators are volunteers who work with other volunteers to serve people in our community who are desperately in need of food. Many of the clients we serve are facing tremendous hardships and depend on us. We have two coordinator positions that we urgently need to fill. For more information or to submit a resume, contact Betsy Vanausdeln at 563-332-5002 or by email at bvanausdeln@cuqca.org.

Help Our Food Pantries



Will your church collect donations for our food pantries?

Help us restock our pantries at a time of the year when people don't usually think about food drives. Our pantries have served throughout the pandemic and they continue to respond to economic challenges facing everyone. With inflationary pressures, it is more important than ever to donate. To connect with a pantry, contact Betsy Vanausdeln at 563-332-5002 or by email at bvanausdeln@cuqca.org.