

In whatever condition I am I can praise the Lord. We can praise the Lord whether He gives us much. We can live on little and praise the Lord. for the opportunity to serve Him under those conditions. That is a primary ~~for~~ for any Christian. Yet while the Christian is in this world he has a duty to do whatever good he can along the way. He has the duty to stand for right, and I believe he should study history and learn something conditions as they developed in order that he may have an influence that will be helpful rather than harmful. Though this I feel is a secondary part of his activities.

Not long ago I read a quotation from C.S. Lewis: In Russia the state is the thing that matters - what's ~~izzit~~ ~~and~~ individual? Throw a 1000 into concentration camps - it helps the state! Kill this individual who ~~XXXXXX~~ steals a tiny bit from the state, but if he steals from an individual it doesn't matter. The state is all-important. When patriotism(?) is too much emphasized it is easy to get that attitude. Yet as Lewis pointed out there is hardly a nation that in anything like its present situation has existed more than a couple of centuries. Most nations exist two or three centuries and they disappear.

But an individual person is a divine creation and will live for all eternity and what we can do to bring the gospel to an individual who can live for all eternity is far more important than anything we can do that can promote the well being of a nation or enable a nation to last longer. Yet having said that we recognize that we do have a duty -- not a primary duty, but a duty - to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's as well as to God the things that are God's.

We have a duty to make our influence that which will be helpful to our nation rather than harmful. The N.T. does not go into this matter to any great length. We do find that buying and selling, putting matters out at interest, that paying taxes are recognized in the NT as matters that ~~one~~ one is expected to take his proper place. Jas. 4:15; Mat. 25:20,27 and a few other references bring out these ideas. We do not find anywhere in the NT ~~that~~ a suggestion that it is the purpose of government to take care of its people from birth to death and to provide everything for them along the way, or that government should try to oversee all the details of the lives of people.

As a matter of fact anybody that knows anything about any govt. in the world recognizes that a govt. is made up of human beings. If you have a monarchy in which the king is supreme, and if you have a king who is perfectly sanctified, and a man of tremendous ability he can pick people of excellent character and tremendous ability to run all the aspects of government. If you have a democracy in which the man with the best smile and the most pleasant personality is elected, and then after being elected has to try to find the proper people for a brief time to hold office and yet has to realize that they and he are thinking constantly of the election, you have a condition in which ~~preferable~~ preferable to a monarch when you do not have ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ a perfect and sanctified ruler, but a condition in which you can expect sin and sloth and nepotism to be very common.

It was not long ago that just about every congressman had his