**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

Sermon

 *Ekklesia Series*

*Our Witness in Times Like These*

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(Unless otherwise noted, NAS quoted)

 We, Christians, wake every morning to a world that brings us surprises and, at the same time, expectations. We are Believers adhering to the Word of God, praying and fellowshipping with the Lord and other Saints.

**Psalm 5:3** In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

 We wake knowing that God has intentionally created us in His image. The image of the living God to carry-out His plan in our lives.

**Romans 8:37** But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

 Our lives have direction, purpose and meaning. We are all instruments of His Holly Spirit working in us.

**Galatians 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. 21 "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

 We are led by God’s Spirit. We do not wake in the morning and read the daily horoscope or read the lines in our palms. Therefore, we are not taken captive by the many vices of the world.

**Galatians 5:18-26**

 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

We are that light to our neighbors (Matthew 5:14-16). We are the love of God presented to the world. Our lives bear God’s Spirit of love, joy, hope, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control of which there isn’t any law on earth that can suppress. We are God’s Spiritual bodies on earth.

**Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

The fallen world in which we live seems to be slipping further and further away from God. All of us can remember the way things were in our childhood. True, there were unruly public events, wars and domestic upheavals. Even though these things happened, the public airways of broadcast news, T.V. shows and movies and the print media had a moral compass based on a Biblical worldview. What we have seen in the past quarter century leaves no doubt that the foundation of a Biblical worldview has long departed the directors and producers of the media world. A seismic shift has taken place and is ongoing.

This shift was a direct reflection of the movement of the moral compass of the nation. There has always been an undercurrent of rebellion in the hearts of people. But there has also been an anticipation of a moral consciousness providing oversight to America. From the White House, from the legislative houses, from the court houses down to the neighborhood houses, every unit of society has been touched. We have been touched but not changed from our founding. The majority of the founders and their unwavering Christian beliefs can never be changed. They may be forgotten or ignored. In order for their work to maintain its intent, it is up to us and every generation. I truly believe that God was at work in them to create a country that shines God’s light around the world.

Today, no other country in the world provides more public assistance through its government or private efforts through faith-based organizations to address the illness and poverty in the world and in world history.

 God’s Bible was the most impactful instrument in the founding of America. This included the Supreme Court.

 John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, also served as the President of the American Bible Society.

The early Congress, of the young Republic, also took the responsibility and authorized the printing of the Aitken Bible of 1782, which was reviewed, approved and authorized by the [Congress of the Confederation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congress_of_the_Confederation).

In addition, Congress acted under the authority of the law in Article 1, Section 2, Clause 5 in the [United States Constitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Constitution) which gives the legislature authority to call a chaplain as an officer of their chamber.

In 1935, the Supreme Court began meeting in its own building. The building has many depictions of ancient and historical legal figures around the building. One such display is on the east pediment with Moses as the central figure holding two tablets. Obviously, the only two tablets Moses is associated are the ten commandments. The east side of the building is the back side of the building and some take note of this not being a prominent place as compared to the front. But a knowledgeable historian knows that all maps of the ancient world from the middle east positioned the compass direction of east at the top on the map as we do north today. East was the direction the sun rose and represented to the ancients a new day under God, as it did Moses. Hence, the prayer of David from Psalm 5.

**Psalm 5:3** In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

 In reality…. The older we become, we store years of experience that have become memories of victories and defeats in our lives. From these experiences, we have developed a spiritual sense about the world. We see things come. Life is more predictable.

 In recent past years, there has been seemingly a greater upheaval in the land. In reality, this evil upheaval has been brewing for centuries and is in constant boil. Genesis 3 accounts for the starting point of this upheaval; no, . . . perhaps Genesis 2 is the beginning where God gives Adam a choice between Him and evil; no, . . . perhaps even before the choice God gave Adam, He created the world and placed life in the creation and called it “good.” This is where the origin of the battle is. This is the sticking point. God declares what is “good,” that is, “moral and right”. We see this God-morality detailed in the sixty-six books of the Bible.

We do note that the Bible details those that agreed with God’s established “good” and those that rebelled against God and His “good.” Even those who woke every day and had the intent in their heart to go with God’s “good,” they, too, fell and stumbled and, in fact, did bad things. We must choose to ‘live out’ God’s “good.” It is not automatic. We Believers know that Paul identifies the power of sin and death in Romans 7 and witnesses that there is only one power greater in Romans 8.

**Romans 8:1-11**

**1** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

 3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,

 4 so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

 5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*,

 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

 9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

 10 If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

 Now, we come to the point of this message to directly identify what God hates in this fallen world. God goes to great lengths using time and treasure to establish nations and bring forth prophets for His purposes. We have witnessed two great outreach efforts from God. One, God established a people called Hebrews to witness His divine plan for humanity. Two, through God’s love, He came to be one of us in the name of Jesus and demonstrated how to live life and how to receive eternal life with Him. God fulfilled His eternal salvation plan by going to the Cross to die for our sins. We can access His salvation by surrendering our hearts to Him.

I was told as a child that God does not hate. As well intended as those thoughts were purposed to be, Scripture tells us differently. God does not love sin. God does not make friends with sin. God does warn the sinner, reaching-out to them, with His Biblical message. Anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13).

 It is unfortunate that God hates things in the world He created. This may be difficult for the non-believer to understand and seemingly a contradiction.

I have provided this teaching in the past. I see that God created us to experience His love. God’s love is the most powerful gift (1 Corinthians 13). God is love (1 John 4:8). The love of God that is offered to each of us comes forth with a choice over sin and death. This is what Adam was confronted with in Genesis 2:17. I have said many times that love is a choice. Love is a choice over its opposite, that is bad, sin and death. God allowed the bad, sin and death in order for us to be able to choose its opposite, that is love. Love cannot be forced or purchased. God presents us a choice to choose Him and His love over the hateful things of the world. It is easy to be a Christian when we are healthy and wealthy. This “health & wealth” shallow philosophy sells very well over the T.V. and at popular pep-rallies. Life is more challenging when we are ill and in poverty. We have a biblical account in John 11 when Jesus calls on Mary and Martha to trust Him even though their brother, Lazarus, died. The message from Jesus is clear. Do not get caught- up in this temporal life. Even though your temporal bodies fail, I will resurrect you to eternal life with me. To be eligible for resurrection all people are called to surrender to the Lord. This is called rebirth of spirit, born-again, circumcision of the heart (John 3, Deuteronomy 30:6ff, Acts 2:37)

History is full of those who did not choose God’s love. These are people who have not surrendered to the Lord, and thus, reborn. God provides for us a list of characteristics that He hates in Proverbs. Unfortunately, people who do not have God’s Spirit operating inside of them tend to due rebellious things. People who willfully practice such things are enemies of God and the people of God.

**Proverbs 6:16-23**

16There are six things which the LORD hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:

 17 Haughty eyes,

blatantly and disdainfully proud**:**having or showing an attitude of superiority and contempt for people or things perceived to be inferior: *haughty* aristocrats

 a lying tongue,

 And hands that shed innocent blood,

 18 A heart that devises wicked plans,

Feet that run rapidly to evil,

 19 A false witness *who* utters lies,

And one who spreads strife among brothers.

 I believe we, as Christian representatives of God’s Word, we owe our neighbor, who does not contain a biblical understanding of the world, a witness to what has happened and what continues to happen. The fallen world calls for us to be quiet and not report what God’s Word declares. The fallen world would have us stay quiet and inside the four walls of the church building.

Take note, it is God and His Word that stands behind America’s founding documents. This is the power that gives us our right and freedom to proclaim His Word in the public square to this day. Without these rights and freedoms, the opposition to God would silence us and silence us with brute force as Christians have been silenced in the past.

What we have witnessed in recent months, from many in our federal government, is a display of what God hates. To be more specific, as I watched the so-called House Managers in President’s Trump impeachment trial in the Senate, I witnessed every one of the sins in Proverbs 6 committed repeatedly. They were on display in full force. This is from the leadership in Democrat party who sheds innocent blood in their evil hearts by supporting abortion-on-demand including partial birth abortion of babies in their ninth month of life. Life begins at conception.

Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Isaiah 49:1 Listen to Me, O islands, and pay attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.

Galatians 1:15 But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased

 I witnessed that these Democrats had been ‘turned over’ to their own desires and only worship themselves. They are representatives of those whom God directed Paul to describe in **Romans 1:18- 32**.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.

 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

 24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

 26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,

 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,

 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

 32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

**Proverbs 6** (continued)

 20 My son, observe the commandment of your father

And do not forsake the teaching of your mother;

 21 Bind them continually on your heart;

Tie them around your neck.

 22 When you walk about, they will guide you;

When you sleep, they will watch over you;

And when you awake, they will talk to you.

 23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life

 We can identify four categories of people, who by omission or commission are involved in the rebellion again God and His people.

To start with we have the “Leaders.” These are leading the way by being front and center for all the world to see. These are the ones on T. V. and other media outlets. They are easy to identify. They are at work in what the Lord hates described in Proverbs 16. These have willful intent to go against God’s good. We witnessed this in the Democrat House Manager when they repeatedly and willingly lied and distorted the facts.

 Next, we have “Followers.” These, follow their leaders around supporting them and being their voices in the local community. These are the grassroot activist we see locally. They, like their leaders, have a strong belief system not based upon God and His Word. They have willful intent behind their actions.

 Then the “Bystanders.” There is a psychological term “the bystander effect” used to describe those who stand around and do nothing in the face of someone being hurt. They may not understand the reasons for the calamity, but they do nothing. They refuse to engage. These have no particular belief system and are ambivalent to God and the Bible.

Then there are the “Complacent.” those who are not aware of the upheaval and its serious impact upon society. They do not have a strong belief system or they would act. These live shut in lives for one reason or another. Perhaps life is too complicated. These are often simply complacent regarding the moral condition of their neighbor. They have a “psyche of complacency” regarding the world around them. These do not care to make themselves informed. They have their head in the ground. They are totally unaware the pot is set to boil.

 The problem we have in the American political system is that all four groups are voters. Why is this a problem? Objectively the “Leaders” and the “Followers” vote based upon their perceived values, be it right or wrong. The “Bystanders” and the “Complacent” have no real clue as to what is going on. However, they too get to vote and impact the system. We have people voting who have no understanding of right and wrong, legal or not legal, or the difference between good and bad from a biblical standpoint.

 What do we do regarding the people who do not have a God-centered-spiritual- consciousness due to their open rebellion or complacent heart? We need to pray for them. Pray that they come to an awareness of their wrong standing with God. We pray that they start a relationship with God. When a person surrenders their will to God then there comes an awareness, a driving spiritual-consciousness directed at the power of sin and death operating in the world. This awareness and driving spirit-led-consciousness are driven by God’s Holy Spirit. Thus, spiritual awareness of God is at work in the heart and mind of the Believer.

**Galatians 2:20**

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

AMEN