

While their focus was on creating these monuments, Long Island's Korean war veterans have discovered a purpose of equal importance. They have created a place for Korean war vets to build a fellowship among themselves and their families. Along with marching in veterans' parades and attending memorial ceremonies, the KVVVA is actively involved in assisting disabled and needy veterans, including those at the veterans hospital in Northport. Each Christmas chapter members visit the Long Island Veterans Nursing Home in Stony Brook to deliver holiday gifts and good cheer.

We enjoy the plentiful fruits of democracy and should always remember that our freedom was paid for with their blood. The Korean War Veterans Association says it best in their September newsletter: "A free America is the most precious gift we can bestow upon our children. Freedom is not free." I ask all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in saluting the Korean War Veterans Association and all of its members, for all they do for our veterans and for all they've done for America.

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH—
PASTOR MARK TEIKE

HON. DAVID M. MCINTOSH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 1996

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, on many occasions, my wife Ruthie and I have worshiped with our special friends at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Columbus, IN.

On each visit we are lifted up by the sermons of Pastor Mark Teike, a dynamic minister whom we have grown to know well in the past few years. His talents and interpretation of holy scripture is truly moving.

This past Independence Day, Ruthie and I had the honor to join the congregation of St. Peter's for a very special Fourth of July sermon. Ruthie and I were both deeply moved. And, I would like to share the transcript of his sermon with my colleagues and the American people.

The Bible teaches that God, because of His love for us, has established three institutions, for our benefit: the church, the family, and the government. We spent much of the last two years, in our study of the book of Acts, looking at what God says regarding the church. We are devoting our summer, with our series of messages under the theme of Home Improvement, looking at what God says about the family. And this weekend, as our nation celebrates another birthday, we're going to examine what God says about government—or as the message has been titled, "The Truth About Government."

We find the Bible addressing this topic the 13th chapter of the New Testament book of Romans. I'd like to invite you to read with me, from the first ten verses of Romans 13, as they're printed in your bulletin on page 5.

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free

from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him. If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not covet,' and whatever other commandments there may be, are summed up in this one rule: 'love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

Did you notice how many times the words "authorities" and "God" are found together in this chapter? Every time you find a reference to authority or to government, you'll find God being mentioned. That's because God himself is the source of all authority. All authority begins with Him and flows from Him, be that in the home, or in school, or in the work place, or in government.

I

First of all we find here in Romans 13 that government was established by God. Verse one says it, "The authorities that exist have been established by God." Government was established by God. It says in verse two, "He who rebels against the authority, rebels against what God has established." God did not institute a certain style of government. He didn't place one form of government over another. He didn't endorse one party over another, but He did establish government.

He did that because He's a God of order, he is not a God of chaos. From His perspective, order in society must be maintained, and so God established government.

II

And what's the purpose of government? Ask a lot of people that question and you'll get a lot of answers. Look at Romans 13 and you'll find one recurring chorus as to the purpose of government. It is to protect its citizens.

Our God knows the condition of the human heart. He knows that the human heart is not prone toward good but toward evil. Luther said the easiest thing in the world is to sin. It comes naturally. You've heard me say it many time before—you don't have to teach a little child how to be naughty.

Look at verse 4, "For he (government) is God's servant to do you good, but if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrong doer." The government is there to protect us from the criminals and thugs and tyrants and swindlers and others who might otherwise harm us. God has given the government the authority to punish those who do wrong.

We all know that our government today, has, in many ways, extended itself into a number of areas that stretch beyond simply protecting its citizens from harm and danger. And that's not to say that's wrong. But the Number one primary thing that government was established by God to do, was to protect its citizens from the harm brought on by others.

III

Look one more time at verse 4. Twice it says of the government, "He is God's serv-

ant." "He is God's servant." Every servant is to be submissive to the will of his master. He may not know the master very well, but the one thing he must do, if he is to serve the master, is to carry out the wishes of the master. Those who serve in government may not all be strong and mature in their faith. They may not even all be Christians. They don't necessarily HAVE to be Christians. But if they are to be faithful servants of the master, they MUST at least know what the word of God says regarding His laws of right and wrong.

We have just seen that the government is a servant of God and as a servant must be accountable to his master, so the government is accountable to God. Before the government or those who serve in government are accountable to their constituents, before they are accountable to their special interest groups, they are first and foremost accountable to God.

You know, it seems to me, that if government is accountable to God and God has laid down His guidelines for right and wrong—then it's pretty much a no-brainer when it comes to some of the laws we pass—regardless of the social or political climate.

For example, regarding the subject of abortion, the scriptures say that the taking of life in the womb is murder and is to be treated as such. It is not debatable on the basis of scripture. And if government and those who govern are accountable to God, then the decision seems pretty clear.

Or the issue of same sex marriages—as has come up in several of our states as of late. The scriptures again speak clearly—very clearly—that such is an offense to God—and if government recognizes that is accountable to God—then the decision on such an issue should be pretty simple—regardless of the pressure that might come from various special interest groups.

I'm not trying to pick on a select group of people. I'm simply pointing out that if government is accountable to God (which the Bible says it is) and if God has spoken clearly on certain issues (which he has) then regardless of what we might think or regardless of what happens to be "politically correct" at the time—government is called to take a stand in obedience to the One to whom they are accountable.

I realize that some might respond to that and say, "But you can't legislate morality." Some say it might interfere with the separation of church and state. So let me just say a words about that, as well.

Our founding fathers, a long time ago, wrote, "Congress shall make no law establishing one denomination of Christians higher than another." The intention was that they did not want in America what they had in England, which was one denomination basically running the country. They said, "We want God's principles in government, but we do not want one denomination running the government."

In 1801 the Danbury Baptist Association of Danbury, Connecticut heard a rumor that the Congregational denomination was to be made the national denomination of America, and that bothered them (understandably so.) So they wrote President Thomas Jefferson expressing their concerns. On January 1, 1802, Jefferson addressed that group saying that "the first amendment of the Constitution has erected a wall of separation between church and state, but that it is a one direction wall. It keeps the government from running the church, but it makes sure that the Christian principles will always stay in government." But all we hear today is a portion of that statement, taken out of context, that the first amendment has erected a wall between church and state.

In 1853, a group came to Congress with a petition to separate Christian principles

from government. The petition was referred to the House and the Senate Judiciary Committees and they investigated the issue for a full year to see if it would be possible to separate Christian principles from government. After one year they came back with the report saying, "Had the people during the Revolution had a suspicion of any attempt to wage war against Christianity, that revolution would have been strangled in its cradle."

And then, nearly 100 years later, in 1947, in a case known as *Everson v. the Board of Education*, the Supreme Court took a different angle on the church/state issue and their ruling was this. "The first amendment has erected a wall of separation between church and state which must be kept high and impregnable." And that was the first time the original understanding of the separation of church and state, presented by our founding fathers in the constitution, had been reversed. It was originally intended to protect the church from the state, and now it is intended to keep the church from influencing the state. It was an absolute, about face, 180 degree reversal from what our forefathers intended.

And since 1962, which was the first ruling to officially separate religious principles from government, in our schools and other areas, since that time, when the high and impregnable wall was erected to keep religious principles out of our government, teenage pregnancies for girls between 10-14 has increased over 600%. Sexually transmitted diseases skyrocketed. SAT scores in school went down for 18 straight years. And violent crimes increased over 600%. George Washington put it well when he said, "If you remove religious principles, you will lose morality in America."

The Bible says that government and its leaders are accountable first and foremost to God.

IV

I don't have a lot of time to cover the fourth point in your outline, except to say that all of us, who are citizens of this country are commanded by God to submit to the government, regardless of who we are or how much money we have or what position we fill. And the only time we're given permission not to submit to government is if government commands us or forbids us to do that which is contrary to the word of God. And if you want a proof text for that, it's found in Acts 5:29.

We're also told to pay taxes. Not only did Paul write it in Romans 13, but Jesus said it in Matthew 22, as we heard earlier in the service. Loopholes may be legal, but cheating isn't.

And as a child is called to give honor and respect to parents and an employee to an employer, so citizens are called to show honor and respect to those who govern.

V

And fifth, what does Romans 13 say about the specific role of we who are Christian citizens? In verses 9 and 10 it says, "Love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no harm to its neighbors. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." You want to know how to help the government? Don't add to their work load. If, in all that you do, you're attempting to respond to the needs of those around you, treating them with love, whether that be the person next door or the guy in traffic next to you, or the person at work who wronged you—if you are treating them with Christian love—then the government doesn't have to worry about you and their job becomes much easier.

And Christian citizens, also, because they, or at least they should have a clear understanding of the word of God—have a respon-

sibility to keep the government and law makers in check, when it comes to issues on which God has clearly spoken. We cannot remain silent. And if we do, we have no right to complain.

And Christian citizens have been instructed in Paul's first letter to Timothy to pray for those in authority over us—which we'll be doing a little later in the service.

CONCLUSION

Some concluding thoughts: Benjamin Franklin said, "We need God to be our friend, not our enemy." You've seen what's happened to our country since we began to remove God's influence from our land.

To you, who are here today as our governmental officials, I want to thank you for taking the time to be here. Some of you are members of our congregation and would be here anyway, but that's not the case for a number of you. Some of you, like Congressman McIntosh have traveled a long way to be with us today and we thank you for making the effort. And I want to encourage all of you who are our elected officials to be bold, courageous leaders, not blown by the whims of what may appear to be popular opinion, or political correctness, but directed by what is right.

Secondly, I want to say especially to our governmental leaders, that the church is the very best friend government has. Thomas Jefferson said it first when he said, "The reason Christianity is the best friend of government is because Christianity is the only religion in the world that deals with the heart." The threat of punishment is sometimes effective and rehabilitation has a purpose but unless you change the heart, you won't do much to affect behavior. And the Church, the Body of Christ, is committed to affecting hearts.

Thirdly, to our public servants, I want to encourage you to stay close to God. In light of what we've seen today from Romans 13, I don't know how you can do your job if you don't. If you're from our community and don't have a church home, then please know that you are always welcome in our midst. Be reminded that you have a God who loves you, just as you are, even when others might be on your back and constantly criticizing. You can't be in any position of leadership and not have someone taking shots at you. But God loves you.

He is a God who came to be your servant, nearly 2000 years ago, as He paid for your offenses and your sins as well as those of the rest of us, on a splintered, wooden cross, and who offers you not only his love, but also his full and complete forgiveness.

And to the majority of us who hold no public government office, but who are citizens of this blessed land, we need to understand, that if people are to be put into office, men and women who will stand firm on the issues on which God has spoken, and whose first concern is obedience to the one to whom they're accountable, then you and I must participate in the process, at every level. We need to make our views known and to exercise that privilege that we've been given in this country.

May God bless you, our elected and appointed officials. May God bless us as a community. And may God bless America.

Please remain seated, as David Florine comes forward to lead us in a time of prayer and confession.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF LATINO/AS CONTRA SIDA-LATINOS AGAINST AIDS

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 1996

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 10th anniversary of Latino/as Contra SIDA-Latinos Against AIDS in the First Congressional District of Connecticut on September 27, 1996.

LCS was founded in 1986 by concerned Latino volunteers who recognized the dire need for specialized services for Latino/as individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS. Through education and prevention efforts for adults, children and youth as well as HIV precounseling, testing, assistance, advocacy and case management services, LCS has served over 5,000 individuals in the Greater Hartford area.

With a mission of preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS among the Latino community in Greater Hartford and enhancing the quality of life of those affected by the HIV disease, LCS has become a major collaborator of health care services.

LCS is comprised of a dedicated and energetic board of directors and a base of community volunteers who continue the significant efforts of its founders: Hector Seda, Roberto Negron, Gladys Capo and Myrna Vargas.

I applaud the work of Latino/as SIDA during the past 10 years and offer my sincerest gratitude and hope for LCS's continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID MINGE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 1996

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote 403 on House Concurrent Resolution 120 I was unavoidably detained on an airplane flight that was badly delayed by mechanical problems and by weather conditions. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes." I ask unanimous consent that my statement appear in the RECORD immediately following rollcall vote No. 403.

A THANK YOU TO THE HABER FAMILY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 5, 1996

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce you to a true American family who has sacrificed and served our great Nation. Eight of Charles and Anna Haber's sons all proudly served in World War II between 1936-47.

The story of the Haber family is one of two people immigrating to the United States, meeting, and overcoming hardships, to live out the American dream. In the early 1900's, Charles and Anna each left Czechoslovakia to come to