

### What If...We Lived Politically?

"...Baptism is the public rite of initiation into the church...it is a form of resocialization and enculturation into the standards of the kingdom of God rather than the world. In particular, the familial metaphors in the New Testament speak of baptism in a manner analogous to admission into a family... Romans 6; 8:15-17; and Galatians 3:26-4:6... Paul reminds believers that "they have a new identity because they have been baptized into Christ and adopted as brothers and sisters. When children are adopted they take on new parents, new siblings, new names, new inheritances – in short, a new culture." ...

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...Not only are the baptized persons initiated into a new local community, they are brought into the communion of saints present and past. They are brought into an amazing extended family. Their new culture is the church. Understood this way, baptism is a political act that threatens the surrounding culture because Christians have publicly declared an allegiance to a God other than the biological family or the state... baptism can still be a form of subversive political action, particularly when the church is seen as alternative culture. In such a view, "when we recognize that 'the people of God do not go to church; they are the church,'

• Vincent Bacote, "Church as a Lifestyle: Distinctive or Typical?" in *This Side of Heaven: Race, Ethnicity, and Christian Faith*, ed. Robert J. Priest and Alvaro L. Nieves (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 202.

### What If...We Lived Politically?

1) Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near...

- **John the Baptist**
  - "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand..." – Matthew 3:2
- **Jesus**
  - From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." – Matthew 4:17
  - And He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. – Matthew 4:23
- **Jesus' disciples**
  - And proclaim as you (disciples) go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' – Matthew 10:7
- **The Church**
  - Acts 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23

### What If...We Lived Politically?

1) Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near...

- Consistent message of God's people.
  - John the Baptist – Matthew 3:2
  - Jesus – Matthew 4:17,23; 9:35
  - the Disciples – Matthew 10:7
  - The Church – Acts 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23
- Satan has power over the kingdoms of the world.
  - 5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.
    - Luke 4:5-7

### What If...We Lived Politically?

1) Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near...

- Consistent message of God's people.
- Satan has power over the kingdoms of the world.
  - Jesus did not dispute this
    - Luke 4:5-7
  - **ruler** of this world
    - John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11
  - **god** of this world
    - 2 Corinthians 4:4
  - the whole world lies in the power of the evil one
    - 1 John 5:19
  - He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
    - Colossians 1:13

### What If...We Lived Politically?

1) Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near...

2) History shows us nations rise & fall...

- **Babylon – 626-539BC**
  - Daniel 2:32 – head of gold
  - Daniel 7:4 – lion
- **Medo-Persia – 539-332BC**
  - Daniel 2:32 – chest & arms of silver
  - Daniel 7:5 – bear
- **Greece – 332-63BC**
  - Daniel 2:32 – belly & thighs of bronze
  - Daniel 7:6 – leopard
- **Rome – 63BC-AD476**
  - Daniel 2:33 – legs of iron and feet of iron & clay
  - Daniel 7:7 – terrifying beast
- **The Kingdom of God**
  - Daniel 2:34-35; Daniel 7:13-14

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#### 2) History shows us nations rise & fall...

• I believe God allowed the atheist government to destroy the old structure of the Chinese church so that he could rebuild it according to his own purposes. He started with little and has made it much!

- Xu Yongze (chairman of the Sinim Fellowship of House Church Leaders in China)

### What If...We Lived Politically?

#### 3) Our citizenship is in heaven

- 1 Peter 2:19
  - but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.
- Our true forefathers...
  - Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob...
    - Galatians 3:7 - those of faith are sons of Abraham
    - Galatians 3:16 - to offspring
    - Galatians 3:25-29 - in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God...
      - no distinction

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#### 3) Our citizenship is in heaven

- 1 Peter 2:19
- Our forefathers are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- politics - doing life in the public sphere
  - Philippians 1:27
    - Only let **your manner of life** be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel...
      - NIV - **conduct yourselves in a manner**
  - Philippians 3:20 -
    - But our **citizenship** is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

### What If...We Lived Politically?

#### 4) Love is to be our distinguishing mark.

- John 13:34-35; 15:13,17
  - Matthew 22:34-40
  - Galatians 5:14
  - Romans 13:10
- A lack of attention to love & excuse-making for non-loving actions has led to a Church that is irrelevant & meaningless for most, and at times a burden & therefore optional for many in Her.