

THE CHRISTIAN PATRIOT

Independence Day 250. Various Passages

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. July 5, 2026.

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What does the Bible tells us about Patriotism?

- How should Jesus-followers relate to their nation?
- Is it OK to be a Patriot even when countries are far from perfect?
- How can we be good citizens and good Christians?

GOD AND CAESAR

Jesus said something simple yet profound about patriotism.

- The religious and civic leaders in Jerusalem tried to get Jesus arrested.

Matthew 22:15-22 (CSB) Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to trap him by what he said. 16 So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are truthful and teach truthfully the way of God. You don't care what anyone thinks nor do you show partiality. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? "

18 Perceiving their malicious intent, Jesus said, "Why are you testing me, hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin used for the tax." They brought him a denarius. 20 "Whose image and inscription is this? " he asked them.

21 "Caesar's," they said to him.

Then he said to them, "Give, then, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." 22 When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

The Pharisees did not support Rome, but the Herodians did.

- They thought they had tricked Jesus with a question about the unpopular poll tax that funded Roman occupation, but Jesus was smarter than them.
- Jesus taught that we owe separate duties to the government and to God; the one wants taxes, the other wants total commitment.

So, I conclude that it's OK to be a Patriot and a Christian.

THE CHRISTIAN PATRIOT

1. STAY SALTY

- The best thing we can do for our nation is to live faithful to Jesus. He said:
Matthew 5:13 (CSB) You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? It's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.
- Salt preserved meat, so it was very beneficial. But if salt lost its saltiness the meat would rot.
- In the same way, Christians who faithfully follow Jesus are a benefit to the nation (like salt) because love is better than hate, hope is better than despair, peace is better than conflict, kindness is better than bitterness, and truth is better than lies.
- The best thing we can do for our nation is to stay salty.

2. WORK FOR THE WELFARE

- We can work for the common good. The example is when Judah was deported to Babylon. God told them he had planted them there:

Jeremiah 29:4-7 (CSB) This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the exiles I deported from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 "Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Find wives for yourselves, and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons and give your daughters to men in marriage so that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there; do not

decrease. 7 Pursue the well-being of the city I have deported you to. Pray to the LORD on its behalf, for when it thrives, you will thrive.”

- The principle is to pursue the welfare of the city, the common good. When the city thrives, everyone thrives. So:
 - Pray
 - Cultivate great families and be good neighbors
 - Volunteer
 - Serve in public office. Vote for the best candidates and policies
 - Be good and godly employers or employees
 - Share the gospel. Invite people to church. Help your church grow strong.

3. PRAY FOR THOSE IN POWER

- Prayer is the priority for patriots. “First of all” means job one.

1 Timothy 2:1-6 (CSB) First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2 for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all, a testimony at the proper time.

- Prayer for the nation pleases God, leaves the church in peace so that we are free to share Jesus Christ, who is the only Savior.

YES, BE A CHRISTIAN PATRIOT!

Stay salty, work for the common good, pray intentionally.

- And maybe God will see fit to pour out his grace on our nation to bring about the greatest spiritual awakening in the history of the world.
- And the United States will be a light shining on a hill for the whole world to know that Jesus is Lord of all.

PERSPECTIVES ON PATRIOTISM

What does it mean for a Christian to love their country? The question feels urgent in a cultural moment when patriotism has become polarizing, viewed as either uncritical love of a country that has obvious flaws, or a form of idolatry, putting country above God. The Bible calls us to something more nuanced.

Paul wrote that every governing authority is "instituted by God" (Romans 13:1), and Peter urged believers to "honor the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17) — not with worship, but with respect befitting one who holds God-given authority. This is love of country in its proper order. Before that, Peter commands something more fundamental: "Fear God." The hierarchy is intentional. God first. Country, rightly loved, second.

True Christian patriotism is not the same as many forms of nationalism. Nationalism says, "My country, above all." Christian patriotism says, "My country, under God." The prophet Jeremiah told exiles in Babylon — a pagan, hostile empire — to "seek the welfare of the city" and pray for it, because their own flourishing was bound up with its flourishing (Jeremiah 29:7). We are to serve, build, and bless the nation where God has placed us, not retreat from it.

But our deepest loyalty runs elsewhere. Paul reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). We are, in a sense, ambassadors of another kingdom, representing its values such as justice, mercy, truth, and love in the one we temporarily inhabit. Healthy Christian patriotism is not waving a flag for God; it is letting God's values reshape the nation we love.

Give thanks for the freedoms God has granted in this land. Pray earnestly for its leaders, its renewal, and its people. Serve your community. Speak truth. Vote with a biblically formed conscience. And remember: a Christian's greatest gift to America is the gospel.

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