

GOD'S WILL FOR THE U. S. A.
Rom. 13:1-5

Intro: A very special day in the history of our nation -- our 200th birthday!

Actually this is very little in the history of the nations. We are only in our childhood as a nation.

The USA is a very remarkable nation -- blessed in a very short period of time beyond what many of the older nations have ever experienced.

But how is it being celebrated?

From all that is being said we are looking mainly at what we have come from, and where we used to be -- not at where we are, and where we are headed. We talk like other nations have talked in past days -- like we are going to be different and as though our nation will go on forever.

No one can tell what is going to happen. Some have tried to find a place for the USA in prophecy, but their findings have not been very conclusive.

But it is extremely important for us to know what God's will is for the nations -- for our nation, and for all other nations. And the only place that we can see this is in the Word of God. We can see in the history of the nations of the earth another evidence for saying that to turn from the Word of God leads to disaster.

Where did the nations come from? Why were they originated? What is God's purpose for them today? These are the questions that we need to be asking if we want to look into the past. Only the Word of God holds these answers.

I. WHERE DID THE NATIONS COME FROM?

They did not begin at creation. They were raised up by God after sin had not only been committed, but after sin had threatened to destroy the earth.

Note The reason for the flood, and God's promise not to destroy the earth again -- and so the nations were established.

II. WHO ORIGINATED THE NATIONS?

God did! And we can see His hand in the nations that have come into being all through history. This is certainly true of our own.

III. WHY DID GOD ESTABLISH THE NATIONS?

He had two reasons:

- A. To restrain and punish what is wrong.
- B. To encourage and reward what is right.

Wrong and right can only be understood in the light of the character of God. Wrong is what displeases God because it is a violation of what He is, and right is that which pleases Him because it is consistent with His character.

IV. WHAT DOES IT REQUIRE OF THE NATIONS AND THEIR CITIZENS?

This is where we come to our text in Romans 13!

The answers all enter into the area of faith and apply equally to all nations.

- A. The belief that our nation is "ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1).

This includes three things that are very important:

- 1. A belief in the existence of God. Cf. Rom. 13:1.

It is meaningless to talk about what God has done if one does not believe in God. Therefore, atheism in any form spells doom for a nation.

- 2. A belief in the purpose of God.

There is a reason behind all that God does. Man may be foolish and do unnecessary things, but this is never the case with God!

And it is important that we find out what the nation is supposed to do.

Where does our nation stand in this? Think of the different types of government:

- 1) Republics.
- 2) Monarchies.
- 3) Dictatorships.

Which is the right kind? This is not the main question (although God established a monarchy over His people). The main question is, What is the nation doing -- the leaders, the government? Are they seeking to fulfill God's purposes?

- 3. A belief in the sovereignty of God.

I can think of several kings mentioned in the Bible who had to learn this the hard way -- among them Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar!

God will see that His purposes are carried out, or He will destroy the mightiest of nations with the greatest histories.

But nations must believe another thing:

- B. The belief that the authority of God stands behind the nation. Cf. Rom. 13:2.

This is what keeps leaders from ruling with fear. A God-fearing leader will not be afraid of men. This was the message of the prophets again and again.

There is one more thing:

- C. The belief that the nation is to please God -- not men (Rom. 13:3-5).

Abraham Lincoln: ". . . that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Little did President Lincoln know how those words would be used to exclude God.

How does a nation do this, i.e., please God?

1. The nation must recognize that there are absolutes -- both for right and for wrong.

And they are determined, not by the government, nor by the people, but by God!

2. The leaders are responsible before God to punish evil and to reward good.

Cf. Prov. 14:34.

3. The citizens of the nation are to be subject to the government -- to the leaders (Rom. 13:6, 7).

Concl: This means that the greatest factor in the security and future of any nation is its godliness -- not its alliances, its money, its armies.

What should we do? 1) Be subject.
2) Pray. Cf. 1 Tim. 2:1-4.