

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

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Politics and Religion

An air of duplicity must have filled the inauguration ceremony this past Monday (January 4th) in Houston as the new Mayor, Annise Parker, was sworn into office with one hand on a Bible that her lesbian partner was holding. The headlines of the Tuesday paper read, "Houston is the largest U.S. city to elect an openly gay mayor." I am personally bothered by this because I grew up in Houston and still try to keep up with the on goings of the city. While I realize that newspapers simply report the news there was still a serious lack of shame in Tuesday's Times Record News article over the matter. Annise Parker directly addressed the city's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community specifically saying, "I understand how much this day means to you... I can feel your excitement and joy... this is one step toward a tomorrow of greater justice." As Parker was being sworn in "Her partner, Kathy Hubbard, held a Bible that belonged to Parker's grandparents..." I find it interesting that while our political leaders use the Bible to be sworn into office they do not apply its principles to their lives.

Other news reveals alarming trends in government positions. As of January 1st 2010, President Obama has appointed a **transgender woman** named Amanda Simpson to be the Senior Technical Advisor to the Department of Commerce. It's the first time a President has appointed an openly transgender person. Simpson said of her appointment, " *"I'm truly honored to have received this appointment and am eager and excited about this opportunity that is before me. And at the same time, as one of the first transgender presidential appointees to the federal government, I hope that I will soon be one of hundreds, and that this appointment opens future opportunities for many others."*

The history of our country is replete with examples of morally depraved incidents and policies among our government officials. Many Christians; however, seem to want so desperately to cling to particular parties and claim allegiance to certain men. One thing that history certainly teaches us is that the arm of flesh will always disappoint when it comes to morality. One way to keep yourself from getting overly worked up or depressed about our political leaders is to

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

Announcements:

Be sure and keep the Husaks in your daily prayers. Pam has been suffering from bronchitis and Walter's dad is currently in the hospital with a leg injury.

Tonight will be the last lesson over the book of **Revelation**. It has been a great study and we have learned much. The sermon notes will be placed on our "archives" page under the "Classes" heading on our website soon. The URL for our church is:

www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org

New Quarter:

Bible study material for the children has now been distributed. We look forward to another quarter to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Bible class teachers of the past quarters and present are to be commended for all the time and effort that they put in to teach and edify us.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

read your Bible and understand what your relationship to these leaders should be.

The Apostle Paul tells us that the governing bodies that are in place have been ordained by God for our good and we are thereby be in "*subjection*" to them (see Rom. 13:1-5). Paul concludes saying, "*Render to all their dues: tax to whom taxes are due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor*" (Rom. 13:7). Furthermore, the Apostle Peter wrote, "*Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king*" (I Pet. 2:17). It seems that many brethren have no problem understanding "*Love the brotherhood. Fear God...*" yet when it comes to "*Honoring the king*" they will not do so. Just look at the e-mails and text messages that we receive daily. Much of the political notes are filled with disparaging statements toward the President of the United States. Again, while I understand immorality must be exposed I also understand that under extremely ungodly times and ungodly governments Paul and Peter divinely wrote, "*Honor the king.*"

If ever there was cause to not honor a king it would have been during the days of Saul, the first king of Israel. Saul made David's life miserable. Saul hated David, sought to kill him every day of his life, and said, "*I will search him (David) out among all the thousands of Judah*" (see I Sam. 20:31; 23:14, 23). David had his chance to do Saul great harm in a cave at Engedi. David's men told him to kill the king of Israel yet David's answer to them reveals a true man of God's disposition toward governing officials that have been ordained by God. David said, "*Jehovah forbid that I should do this thing unto my lord, Jehovah's anointed*" (I Sam. 24:6). David then addresses Saul with great respect saying, "*My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth, and did obeisance... I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is Jehovah's anointed*" (see I Sam. 24:8-10). God forbid that the elect of God would put forth hand or words that illustrate a spirit of disrespect, dishonor, and a lack of fear toward God's ordained governing bodies. While David had great disagreements with Saul he maintained a respectful attitude toward the king (see I Sam. 24:12).

Yes, if our government permits or commands sinful duty then I will do as Peter and the apostles and "*obey God rather than man*" (see Acts 5:29). Otherwise, I will do as the Lord commands me and thereby honor, fear, and be in full subjection to them. My hope will always be in Christ rather than the arm of flesh. Do all within your lawful power to make this country as godly as a non-Christian society can be but do not lose sight of God's authorized commands. I am thankful that our country has a military capable of protecting us. I am thankful that we have civil order and police officers. I am thankful for all that we are blessed with in this country and will thereby gladly and lawfully pay my taxes and give them honor.

John C. Robertson

A Proper Approach to Serving God

Introduction:

God's desire for man is clearly documented in the Bible. **The Lord desires man to know His laws, be obedient, and serve him out of a heart of true love and desire** (see Micah 6:8; Joel 2:12-13; Matt. 22:37; Rev. 2:10). Though God's desire for man is well documented in divine revelation Jesus told us that many of the rulers of the people (Jn. 12:42-43), the Pharisees (Matt. 23:15), and the people themselves (Matt. 15:8-9) revealed just the opposite disposition toward the Lord and His laws. How do you approach God's divine revelation? Why do you do the things you do in relation to your service to God? This study shall examine a conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees that shall shed light upon our approach to God's laws and serving Him in true faith.

I. The Pharisees Accuse Jesus and his Disciples of Sin (Matt. 12:1-8):

A. Jesus asks the Pharisees, "*Have ye not read...*"

1. About David's error (I Sam. 21:1ff)

2. About the guiltless work of the priest on the Sabbath

B. Pharisees were guilty of condemning the guiltless (Matt. 12:7-8)

II. Samuel's Divine Advise for Saul (I Sam. 15:22):

A. Saul had sacrificed an animal for the sake of sacrificing rather than waiting upon Samuel as he had been commanded (the sacrifice was worthless).

B. Samuel's instruction: "*Behold to obey is better than sacrifice...*" (I Sam. 15:22).

III. Hosea's Divine Instruction to Israel (Hos. 6:6):

A. God's controversy with Israel (Hos. 4:1) was that they were defiled (Hos. 5:3; 6:10). Israel's knowledge of God came to be so minimal that when they saw His laws they were "*strange*" (Hos. 8:12). Truly they had a "*spirit of whoredom*" (Hos. 4:12; 5:4).

B. Oddly enough Israel continued to render religious service to God (Hos. 8:13) while showing themselves to be ungrateful (11:3-4; 13:5-6).

Conclusion:

Why do we participate in the five acts of worship on the first day of the week? Why do we attend Bible classes on Sunday morning and Wednesday night? Why do we deliver prayers to Jehovah God? Why do we examine and expose sin in other's lives? God desires us to be obedient to Him out of a sincere love, appreciation, and reverence for all that He has done and will do for us into all eternity. God desires His people to know His laws and to make proper application of them in our lives. Those who bind where God has not bound for the sake of personal conviction or hatred will have no place in the kingdom of God (I Tim. 4:1ff).