

WEDNESDAY SERMON

Willow, Alaska

Date: October 02, 2019

Scripture Reading:

Text: Multiple

Subject: CONFESSION OF FAITH SERIES – Civil

**Government: Saints Holding Office and Taking Oaths –
No. 52**

52. Civil Government: Saints Holding Office and Taking Oaths*

It is lawful for a Christian to be an officer of the civil government.

If we are asked to take an oath, it is right for us to affirm the truth without swearing by anything or anyone.

Ac.8:38, 10:1, 2; Ro.16:23; 2Co.10:11; Mt.5:33-37; Ja.5:12.

**This is an added article not in the 1644 COF.*

- **It is lawful for a Christian to be an officer of the civil government.**

Acts 8:27-29 (KJV) *And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, **an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure**, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.*

Acts 8:34-39 (KJV) *And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? **35** Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. **36** And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? **37** And Philip said, If thou believest with*

all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

- **We have examples of God’s children in the Old Covenant days being employed as high-ranking servants in governments other than Israel:**

- **Nehemiah 1:11 (KJV)** *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.*
- **Esther, Mordecai**
- **Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego.**

- **And we have examples of men serving in government who were not forbidden in the NT.**

- **Publicans (Tax Collectors) and Soldiers who came to John the Baptist.**
 - **Luke 3:12-14 (KJV)** *Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? 13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. 14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And*

he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

Acts 10:1-2 (KJV) *There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, 2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.*

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Cornelius was a commander over an hundred soldiers in the Roman Army. After his conversion and baptism, the apostle Peter definitely did not tell him to get out of the army.

Romans 16:23 (KJV) *Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.*

The English word “chamberlain” comes from the Greek word: “οικονομος oikonomos” which is translated as: steward 8, chamberlain 1, governor 1; 10.

[**OED: Chamberlain, n:** A chamber attendant of a lord or king; one who waits on him in his bed chamber (arch); An officer charged with the private affairs of a nobleman or a sovereign.]

Erastus was evidently both a servant to a high ranking official and at the same time a member of the church of God which was at Corinth. We see no rebuke toward this man, nor any other who serve in such capacities. The big thing is, that wherever we may be called to serve, there is a church of the Lord Jesus Christ in which we serve the LORD.

- **One may ask, if God swore with an oath, we are to do the same thing. This is not true. God may do any number of things and command us to do otherwise. He is God.**

- **Hebrews 6:16-19 (KJV)** *For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*

- **If we are asked to take an oath, it is right for us to affirm the truth without swearing by anything or anyone.**

Matthew 5:33-37 (KJV) *Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: **34** But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: **35** Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. **36** Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. **37** But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*

James 5:12 (KJV) *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.*

Therefore, brethren, we will not break laws in our own land by simply stating that a thing is yes – or no. God’s people who were under the law covenant were instructed to swear by God’s name:

Leviticus 19:11-12 (KJV) *Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. 12 And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.*

Deuteronomy 6:13 (KJV) *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.*

Under the New Covenant, you and I, are instructed of our Lord and the apostles to “swear not at all – but let our answers be yea, yea, and nay, nay. More than that comes of evil. Let us, therefore take great care in what we say and the manner in which we say things one to another! Remember these proverbs concerning our use of words:

Proverbs 10:19 (KJV) *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*

Proverbs 17:27 (KJV) *He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.*

Proverbs 29:20 (KJV) *Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*

Colossians 4:6 (KJV) *Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*

Leviticus 2:13 (KJV) *And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.*

Salt stands for grace. The LORD commanded salt to be offered with every meat offering – yea, with all the offerings. Salt makes food savoury, and preserves from putrefaction. Such ought to be our speech – seasoned with salt.

2 Kings 2:20-22 (KJV) *And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. 21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. 22 So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.*

Matthew 5:13 (KJV) *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

Mark 9:50 (KJV) *Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.*