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POLITICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

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**#FaithAndPolitics Town Hall
Meeting**

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My work here seems very simple and straight forward. I just want to answer 6 or 7 questions I caught on Twitter and throw out some digestives. I will batch the questions 'cause they're related.

Question Batch No 1:

Should the church get involved in politics? Should religion be a part of politics? Why should a pastor contest for a political position?

The truth is, what we call the Church is actually a political entity, and so is the Christian. It is our religious mindset that prevents us from confronting the realities of salvation. The new social contract enacted by God-what we call the New Testament, is different from the legacy social contract called the Old Testament in one major respect. In the Old Testament to be a priest you must be genealogically descended from Levi.

But there was a priesthood established BEFORE the inauguration of the Levitical order. It is called the Melchizedekian order, or the Order of Melchizedek. The Bible says Jesus belonged to this order. He is our high priest but he was not a Levite. He is actually from the tribe of Judah.

Levitical

The Bible says Christians belong to this priesthood - the Order of Melchizedek. It predates Moses and the Ten Commandments - the Law.

In the Levitical order you cannot combine priesthood with another vocation. You served in the temple in Jerusalem. But the Order of Melchizedek is a very peculiar priesthood. It is a priest-king equation. In other words it is a spirito-political priesthood. And it allows you to combine your priesthood with “secular” vocations. Or else we’ll all be in Jerusalem now, assuming of course we can prove that Nigerians are descended from Levi. It is because Jesus operated the Melchizedek order that he called men in secular professions to become apostles. Peter, Andrew and Phillip were seafood entrepreneurs. Luke was a medical doctor. Simon was an ultra nationalist, a right wing agitator. Mathew was a quasi civil servant, a tax collection agent... It is for this reason that pastors can be lawyers, doctors, civil servants, entrepreneurs, professors etc.

It is also the peculiarity of this priesthood that allows Jesus himself to function as High Priest AND yet serve in a political capacity in Heaven. He is the Sheblimini - the one who sits on the right hand of Majesty - Otunba! Based on that template really, there’s no reason a political office holder can’t



administrate Nigeria Monday to Saturday and come to church on Sunday. Jesus does that every week! So all those politicians who are too busy with so-called affairs of State to come to church on Sundays... Come on!

The point I'm making is that your priesthood is a political priesthood. It's why the Bible calls you citizen. (Eph.2:19) Citizenship is a political expression denoting rights and duties to the state or political authority. Christians have dual citizenship. It's why we function politically in both realms. With the foregoing in mind, it would seem curious that a Christian is wondering whether the Church should get involved in politics or not! You are already in politics! You are a political entity, you belong to a political entity and your master is a political entity.

Did Jesus get involved in politics? Of course he did! Why do you think they assassinated him? Because he took someone's Coke? They assassinated him for treason, for claiming to be a king. That was the criminal charge pasted on the cross. It was judicial murder by the political establishment. His message and ideology was simple: you can't be liberated unless you're liberate yourself from within. Change begins on the inside. The kingdom of God is within you!



Question Batch No.2:

Can a pastor anoint someone to win an election?
And if anointed, is the person God's candidate? And
if truly God called pastors to participate in politics,
then why did Rev. Chris Okotie lose?

In answering this batch of questions I'm going to
say things that challenge our generally held but
uninterrogated beliefs and practices.

Christians sometimes get caught up in the dark
shadows of the Old Testament. Anointing people for
office is an Old Testament political practice, and
there are only two contexts for such an anointing:

1) If a nation is running a theocracy - which is a
government with God at the helm of the state
organogram, in which case he is represented by the
High Priest.

2) When the system of government is a monarchy.

Nigeria is neither a theocracy nor a kingdom. It is a
democratic republic with a multi religious cum
secular status. If anointing is the way to get into
office we won't need to vote.

Now here's the bigger truth. All Christians are
anointed (1 John 2:27, 2Cor.1:21).



Our anointing derives from the anointing of Jesus (Acts 10:38). The only administration of oil anointing in the New Testament is the anointing of the sick for healing. And even at that it's not so much about the oil. The oil is just a faith enabler. It is the prayer of faith that saves the sick. (James 5:14).

But let's look at the practicalities of political anointing. Who is the High Priest of Nigeria who will administer anointing for political office? Who? There's only one high priest in the New Testament and his name is Jesus the Christ.

Now, let me throw light on a tangential issue, and again this may upset our theology. It is important to know that there are different dimensions to God. We are used to God the Compassionate - the God who saves, heals, feeds and clothes us, and we use that template to process our entire understanding of God. But there are other dimensions to God. There is God the Judge. There is God the Venture Capitalist. There is God the Scientist. There is God the Commander-in-Chief, and there is God the Government. All these roles operate by different sets of rules. When it comes to politics and power God the Government is only concerned about his program and agenda, nothing else.

In trying to divine whom God has chosen to be President come May 29, Christians have been

Leander

using the wrong template. They assume the person God will give power is the person God likes personally, or who likes the Christian God. And so politicians have been dying to show Christians how much they love the Christian God and seeking God's approval. We are mixing things up, including the concept of righteousness, about which we'll talk in a bit. But search the scriptures. That God put you in power doesn't mean God loves you. Of course there are people like David who attain political power and whom God likes. But David's political importance was about the genealogy of Christ and the fact that God said he would carry out his political program to the letter, unlike Saul (Acts 13:22). It's always about God's program when it comes to politics and power.

Many of the people God installed in power he didn't even like. And Cyrus the Great didn't know him. He was anointed by God to facilitate the return of the Babylonian exiles circa 539BC. Some of these rulers were indeed wicked. Nebuchadnezzar was a tyrant and fascist. Think Ahab and you think Jezebel. Indeed all the kings of Israel from the 10th to 8th century BC were wicked, and only 8 of the 20 kings of Judah were good men. Omri was extra bad. I'm not saying we should vote a wicked man into power. Such a conclusion betrays a lack of intellectual sophistication or mischief, or both. I'm just saying God's political parameters are different



from the ones we've adopted. It is his agenda that counts. What is God's agenda for Nigeria? That's the paramount question.

As to why Rev. Chris Okotie lost the election, I'm sorry you'll have to ask for him. He's old enough and articulate enough. Though one can argue that his political contestation opened up the political space for first, Pastor Tunde Bakare and now Prof. Osinbajo. Perhaps that was the purpose of God.

Question Batch No. 3:

If righteousness exalts a nation and there are so many Christians in Nigeria, how come Nigeria has a bad reputation? How come Nigeria's image is inversely proportional to the quantum of Christians in the nation? Why are things so bad?

Again our problem is lack of scholarship. Paul enjoined Timothy to STUDY the scriptures not just read.

There are three types of righteousness mentioned in scriptures. There is God's righteousness. Then there's personal righteousness and then governmental righteousness. Personal righteousness is for the salvation of an individual and it is wholly derived from the sovereign rights of a righteous God. God exercises his constitutional

Lawrence

right to be merciful to anyone he pleases, and to give them his righteousness so they have legal cover. The righteousness that saves the individual is a free gift from God. You cannot earn it. It is by grace. But that variety of righteousness cannot elevate a nation. Governmental righteousness is what elevates nations.

What is governmental righteousness? The word translated “righteousness” in Proverbs 14:34 from which we get the phrase, “Righteousness exalts a nation”, is the Hebrew word Tsadaqah. It’s the feminine noun of Tsedeq, which means doing the right thing nationally, morally and legally. It also means equity, prosperity and straightness- what ought to be- the ideals of society. In other words if Nigeria’s fundamental objectives of state policy are visionary, geared towards lifting the masses out of poverty, tackling corruption and ensuring equity and justice the nation will be exalted. Any nation that does right by its policies will be exalted, even if it’s an atheist nation. China has state sponsored atheism yet it is exalted. According to World Bank report, since 1978 when China initiated market reforms it has lifted more than 500m people out of poverty. That’s almost three times the entire population of Nigeria. The economy is expected to grow by 7% this year. And that means it slowed down a bit. 7.4% last year. It is not personal righteousness that exalts nations, it is governmental



righteousness. If a Christian gets to power and executes bad policies the nation will not be exalted. The corollary is also true: if a non-Christian gets into power but executes good policies the nation will be exalted.

Bottom line: Vote your heart not your fears; and don't vote in ignorance. Who has the best policies, and who can execute those policies? Who's in tune with God's agenda to lift 60.9% of Nigerians out of absolute poverty? (That's 112.47million people). Who can provide security for the nation? Who can diversify our economy? Who is keen on education for the masses? Who is focused social justice? Who can provide power? Who can create an enabling environment for the fructification of the dreams of our youths who constitute 70% of our population? Who will create jobs for our youths? Who has a vision to make our country great, to revamp our image, to make us proud to be Nigerians? Who will guarantee our freedom to worship our God without fear, let or hindrance? Who can unify a now very deeply divided country? And who will fight corruption?

Whoever can convince you on these issues is the person you should vote.

Thank you and God bless!