

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church  
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Sermon title: “For Those Afraid of President \_\_\_\_\_ and Other Things”

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**INTRODUCTION:** By the time our telecast airs next Sunday, the campaign will be decided. Tuesday our nation will decide between two candidates who’ve set the record for negative political campaigning. I’m not even going to bother to mention the third party candidates because, at best, their campaigns are on life support. I have some friends who are voting for third party candidates, and probably some of you here will do the same thing. It’s definitely your right to vote as you desire, and if you vote for one of the third party candidates, I hope you will feel good about yourself on Wednesday morning.

Presidential campaigning dominates the news starting about a year and a half before the election. Think about it—since we have a Presidential election every four years, this means we only have a break of two and a half years. And with other federal elections, state, and local elections, we are an election-saturated society. In our media saturated society, avoiding election coverage is almost unavoidable and at the same time, it’s pretty much unbearable. I’ve heard all the speeches I want to hear. I’ve heard all about all the candidates I want to hear. I don’t want to hear anything else. At this point, I’d rather hear scratching on an old timey chalkboard than another campaign speech by either candidate. And I don’t want to hear another sensational news story. Our media are quick to assign guilt to both candidates without any type of trial. We hear one news story immediately contradicted by another. We don’t know what’s true or who to believe. I believe it’s time we disciplined ourselves and had media fasts— blocking out the nonsense and rather, spending time in prayer. Thank goodness for the World Series, which helped us focus on other things for a few nights.

Most of you listening to me are older than I and you may laugh, but the earliest president I remember was President Nixon. As a boy, I saw him as a firm anchor who kept the world safe. When the Watergate scandal broke out, I didn’t understand it, and for the most part, I still don’t, but it’s apparent that the scandals of some of

today's leaders make Nixon look like a saint, comparatively speaking. As far as Presidents go, I'd say Ford may be my favorite, because in his brief time in office, he didn't do any damage to the country. But I'd say all of the Presidents had their pros and cons.

The difference between previous elections in our lifetime and the current election is that we have two firsts: one candidate for president is the first woman to run for president and the other is a man who has no political pedigree whatsoever. The woman is running based on her credentials as a political figure, and the man is running based on having no political office.

One thing which stands out in this election is the public's fear of the candidates. About as many fear Donald Trump as do Hillary Clinton, and it appears many will vote for the candidate they are least afraid of. I must say I've had fear thinking about "what if" scenarios. What if Trump is elected and says something stupid and triggers a war? What if Clinton is elected and \_\_\_\_\_? The list of fears can go on and on.

Since there is so much fear around this election I want to point out Scripture of hope—God is indeed in charge of human affairs. Here are three points to today's message:

1. Human systems are accountable to God.
2. God works through people to accomplish his will.
3. Fear should call God's people to action, not hiding.

### **First, HUMAN SYSTEMS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD.**

You know, no leader becomes a leader without God allowing it to be so. This is difficult to comprehend when you look at some of the awful kings and dictators the world has had. Yep, those awful leaders – God allowed it. Stay with me...don't change the channel just yet.

Our Founding Fathers hoped a government of the people, by the people, and for the people would end the tyrannical rule under which the human race had suffered. We can say at this point, the Founding Fathers' dream has lasted 240 years. But

honestly, democracy is merely a human system. It is not perfect. It is not flawless. It has its weaknesses. And someday it will pass, just like other government systems have passed.

Jesus answered [Pilate], *“You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.”* (John 19:11)

*For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.* (Romans 13:1b)

Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: *“Because you have not obeyed my words, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the LORD and for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.”* (Jeremiah 25:8-9)

*For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you [God] anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.* (Acts 4:27-28)

Not only are human systems accountable to God, but

## **Second, GOD WORKS THROUGH PEOPLE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL.**

I read a long article by a man who basically said it doesn't matter who he votes for because ultimately God decides. I wonder if he has the same logic about the food he eats. I wonder if he doesn't save for the future because he believes it's all in God's hands. I wonder if he tells his family not to take medicine when they are sick because it's all in God's hands.

The idea that nothing matters because it's all in God's hands excuses people from their responsibility of making responsible decisions. Yes, God's Will --- will prevail, but God holds people responsible for their decisions. I want you to remember this.

I'm kind of tired of hearing people say, "Everything that happens is God's Will." Stop saying this! This is what Muslims believe about Allah. God allows many things to happen which are not in his perfect will. Let's go back to the Garden of Eden. Was it God's Will that Adam and Eve eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? No.

In First Samuel the people wanted a king. It was not God's desire. Instead, he wanted to lead people through the Prophet. But no, the people wanted a king, so he gave them one. Saul. Overall, Saul was an awful king. He gave the people what they wanted. After Saul, God gave them David. David wasn't perfect, but was a great leader and was a man after God's own heart.

God works through people to accomplish his will. Before Samuel, God accomplished his will through leaders we call "judges". Most of these judges were people we would today consider crazy.

*First judge:* Othniel; 40 years.

*Second judge:* Ehud; 80 years. Ehud said to an enemy king, "*I have a message from God for you*", *drew his sword, and stabbed the king in his abdomen.*

*Third judge:* Shamgar; killed 600 people with an ox goad, basically a cattle prod

*Fourth judge:* Deborah and Barak; 40 years.

*Fifth judge:* Gideon; 40 years. Led battle with 300 men with clay jars, shofars, and torches

*Sixth judge:* Abimelech; 3 years.

*Seventh judge:* Tola; 23 years. The Bible mentions the least about this man. We know nothing about his time as judge. Judges Chapter Ten gives us some of his relatives' names...his grandfather was Dodo. Can you imagine today's media having fun with this name?

*Eighth judge:* Jair; 22 years. All of his reign was peaceful.

*Ninth judge:* Jephthah; 6 years. This guy was just crazy. He wouldn't win an American election. I certainly wouldn't vote him.

*Tenth judge:* Ibzan; 7 years.

*Eleventh judge:* Elon; 10 years.

*Twelfth judge:* Abdon; 8 years.

*Thirteenth judge:* Samson; 20 years. He was so disobedient to God.

*Fourteenth judge:* Eli; 40 years. He had two awful sons. Had they been alive today they would have created some great fodder for American media.

*Fifteenth judge:* Samuel. The last judge was Samuel—a good judge.

This list took a little time, but my goal is to tell you these people were ordained of God to rule during their day. Some of them were good; some were not so good; some were awful. None of them would have been nominated by any American political party today.

Listen to me, everyone. Every Democrat, Republican and everyone else: whoever you think the prime candidate is – vote for that person – but realize God might have someone else in mind to accomplish his will on this earth.

Let's review: Human systems are accountable to God – and – God uses human systems to accomplish his will, next

### **Third, FEAR SHOULD CALL GOD'S PEOPLE TO ACTION, NOT HIDING.**

Growing up, I heard evangelists predict the upcoming unraveling of the country. As a kid, some of their sermons caused me to be afraid. Well, today, it's clear --- our country is unraveling in many ways. The rule of law only works if leaders uphold the rule of law. And voters are the ones who elect people who either uphold the rule of law or elect people who think they are above it. It's also the voters who decide to elect leaders who steer the course of the country for generations to come.

Many of our Christian voices today believe there are three specific Supreme Court rulings which have contributed to the breakdown of a great country: The rulings about prayer in public schools, abortion, and gay marriage.

Engel vs Vitale in 1962 – also known as the ban on prayer in public schools  
Those who voted for the ban include 3 justices appointed by Eisenhower, 2 by Franklin Roosevelt, and 1 by Truman.

Roe vs Wade in 1973 –Those who ruled that it was unconstitutional for states to ban abortions except in certain instances include: 4 appointed by Nixon and 1 by Johnson. So the record shows the Republicans weren't as pro-life back then as many might think.

And in 2015 Obergefell vs Hodges (better known gay marriage decision)  
Those who voted in support of gay marriage include: 2 appointed by Obama, 2 appointed by Clinton and 1 by Reagan.

Right now we have a vacancy on the Supreme Court, so the next President will appoint someone for this vacancy. And if you look at the ages of the current court, the next President might appoint three more as well.

*Listen to this: First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)*

**CONCLUSION:** Are you a person who lives in fear? Is fear your default response when you hear any type of news? I knew a grown man who said he wasn't afraid of the dark, but he was afraid of what was in the dark. Fear grips us all in different ways. If you are a fearful person, you've got to learn---Jesus is your only hope. There is only one thing people should REALLY fear – and that's the holy wrath of God. At the end of time as we know it, all human systems will fail.

Philippians 2 tells us because Jesus died on the cross: *God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,<sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil.2:9-11)*

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

Find me at [www.thbc.com](http://www.thbc.com) Click on sermons or YouTube channel: Pastor Paul Gunn  
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