

Speaker: Matthew Ott

Series: Christians in the Public Square

Sermon Title: Where We've Been, Where We Are, Where We're Heading

Scripture: **Romans 5:1-5**; **John 14:6**; **Titus 2:7-10**; **Matthew 10:33-34**; **Romans 13:1**; **Daniel 12:1**;
Isaiah 9:6

Main Idea: God is always with us (past, present and future) to provide strength, encouragement and hope during trial and tribulation.

1. Where We've Been

- Coming to America (Political and Religious Freedoms)
- The Preamble to The Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."
 - Founding Fathers were not all Christian
 - There is one path to the Father/salvation (John 14:6)
- This is the trial and hope!
 - Christians have always been ridiculed for our faith
 - We must be bold, especially in the public square.
 - Stand firm and represent the church correctly (Titus 2:7-10)
 - Stand firm when encountering trials
 - There is nothing new under the sun

2. Where We Are

- Do not be surprised that society is extremely polarized (Matthew 10:34)
- We are in the midst of trial and tribulation
 - Christians are still being persecuted
 - We should be praying for these secret churches
 - We should be bold in the face of persecution
 - We are to stand firm in our faith
- Trial and tribulation is a great thing (Romans 5:3-5)!
 - God is using this in our lives, in our country
 - Persevere and publicly give credit to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- How will godly leaders be appointed by the Lord if the Lord's children are not giving their voice and being heard?

- As we engage in the public square, trust in God (Romans 13:1)

3. Where We're Heading

- Trial and tribulation (Daniel 12:1)
- Hope
 - There is now no condemnation for those that are in Christ (Romans 8:1)
 - He will wipe away every tear
 - This is not our home
 - We are saved from the wrath to come, though we must endure to the end

Conclusion

- Isaiah 9:6 “For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

FREE RESOURCES (Also at table in back):

1. Owen Strachan, *Voting and the Church: Why Christians Engage the Public Square* (<https://www.drjamesdobson.org/voting-and-the-church-ebook>).
2. Rick Thomas, *Politics and Culture* (<https://lifeovercoffee.com/product/politics-and-culture/>).
3. Christians Engaged, *Biblical Roadmap to the Party Platforms: A non-partisan reference guide for the 2024 General Elections* (<https://christiansengaged.org/platform-roadmap>).

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. When has the trial and tribulation in your life been too much to bear? How did God reveal himself as the one carrying you through? Did this revelation come during the trial or after?
2. If this revelation was after the trial, how did you maintain your hope that this too shall pass?
3. How has the governance of Christ given you hope to carry on in everyday life? Do you need hope when life is at its peak of blessing?
4. How have you partnered with God to fulfill His good will in your life? How have you done this in the life of others?

5. When have you been challenged in your faith? What was your response? Did you use scripture to stand firm? If so, what verse or verses have been the “go-tos” guiding you and why?
6. Have you considered your response to a government revoking your freedom to practice Christianity? How would that response glorify the Lord? What has stopped you from considering this possibility happening in America?