



## Summer Institute 2010 Bible Readings

### **Monday: Purpose of Life / Role of Tension, Conflict and Suffering**

Can the purpose of life as explained in the Bible be realized through a political structure?

**1. Promise to Abraham**

**Genesis 12:1–3**

**Galatians 3:8–9**

What is the blessing of Abraham? Do we have any clues? Why does the Bible make such a big deal of it?

**2. Eternal, incorruptible inheritance.**

**1 Peter 1:3–9**

**3. New heaven and new earth.**

**Revelation 21–22**

**4. Image of the joy set out before us.**

**Hebrews 12:1–17**

Is Paul suggesting that suffering and hardship is normal? Are they necessary? If so, why do you think that is?

What does suffering say about the goodness of God?

Does this passage give us any insight into what makes suffering bearable?

Does this passage give us any insight into our proclivity to eliminate suffering in our life? Does it give us any insight into our desire to have government eliminate suffering in our life?

Is the elimination of suffering a proper pursuit of government? Is it the proper measure of its validity?

### **Tuesday: Political Equality and Biblical Equality**

**What is the difference between current views of political equality versus the biblical view of equality?**

**1. Don't show partiality / Sundry laws.**

**James 2:1–13**

**Leviticus 19:9-18**

Does James' argument here have any implications for God's perspective on the relative value of human beings?

Is our concept of other human beings a moral issue? How so? What is the evil of misjudging the value of another human being?

Does this have any significance for social and political structure?

## **2. Role and value of individuals.**

### **I Corinthians 12**

What is Paul's distinction between the role a person has and the value a person has?

Does this have any implications for social and political institutions?

Does this have any implications for modern American democracy?

## **Wednesday: Bible and Human Freedom, Responsibility, and Moral Maturity**

**Government wants to take away people's freedom. People want to give away their freedom. Is this sentiment consistent with a biblical worldview?**

### **1. Government tries to play God.**

#### **Luke 22:24 - 27**

What is Jesus' saying here with respect to the proclivity of governmental authorities?

### **2. Mankind's tendency to deify society.**

#### **Genesis 11**

Why does man build the Tower of Babel?

### **3. Humanity chooses king because he wants government to be God.**

#### **1 Samuel 8 (Psalm 146:3, 1 Peter 2:16)**

#### **Deuteronomy 17:14–20**

What do these passages have to say about the proclivity of human beings with respect to governmental authorities?

### **4. We need to take responsibility for our own lives.**

#### **1 Timothy 5:1–18**

#### **2 Thessalonians 3:1–16**

What do these passages have to say with respect to the value, import, and/or morality of individual responsibility?

Are these passages in tension with other biblical injunctions to love one another "not just in word, but in deed and in truth"?

## **Thursday: Democracy and Human Depravity**

**What are the pitfalls of democracy?**

### **1. Fickleness of the crowd (from Triumphal Entry to "Crucify him!")**

#### **John 6:15**

#### **Matthew 21:1–11**

#### **Luke 23:13–25**

What do these passages suggest with respect to the character and nature of the *demos*, the people?

**2. Power of mob rule (mob riots against Paul).**

**Acts 17:5**

**Acts 21:35**

What do these passages suggest with respect to the character and nature of the *demos*, the people?

**3. Power and influence of the mob (against John the Baptist and Jesus)**

**Matthew 14:5**

**Matthew 27:24**

What do these passages indicate with respect to the relative role of the *demos*, the people and the governing authorities?

**4. Trusting God rather than authority or popular opinion and the consequences to unbelief.**

**John 2:23–25**

**Romans 1:18–2:2**

Do these passages teach us anything that is relevant to the value of popular support and public opinion?

Do these passages teach us anything that is relevant to the stability and effectiveness of democracy?

**Friday: God’s View of Governing Institutions**

**Is there a Biblical Mandate?**

**1. Mosaic Covenant – relative to specific time, person & place.**

**Exodus 6:1–13**

What is the nature of the Mosaic Covenant?

What is the relevance of the Mosaic Covenant?

Does the Mosaic Covenant have any relevance to 21st Century Gentiles?

**2. Mosaic Laws**

**Deuteronomy 4–11, 22, 29–31**

What is the nature of the Mosaic Covenant?

What is the relevance of the Mosaic Covenant?

Does the Mosaic Covenant have any relevance to 21st Century Gentiles?

**3. Paul’s theory of governing authorities.**

**Romans 13:1–13**

What is Paul’s “theory” of human government?

Does Paul’s theory of human government indicate the superiority of one form of government over another?