

Political Prayer

Scripture Reading — Psalm 2

*You kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.
Psalm 2:10 —*

Psalm 2 turns our attention to the cosmic sweep of nations and governments. It pushes us into politics.

Maybe this makes you hesitate: “Politics? I don’t want to be part of a group that mixes religion and politics. Psalms are supposed to teach us to pray. Why taint prayer by adding politics?”

It’s true that mixing politics and religion has brought some nasty results: crusades, inquisitions, witch hunts, genocide, and more. But this prayer book called Psalms tells us that prayer and politics have to mix. If we don’t mix faith and politics, we live our life in separate compartments, eventually becoming phonies. A life of integrity requires that we combine politics and faith without letting one corrupt the other. The only safe way to combine them is through prayer.

Most of us keep our spirituality private. We pray to boost our inner peace. We ask God to watch over our family. But Psalm 2 uses kingdom language, calling us to pray for nations and rulers. No wonder. The Psalter’s central image is that God is King! The psalms urge us to get this straight: the center of gravity for all people, for all hope and justice, is God the King. Psalm prayers are just as concerned with rough and tumble politics as with our inner spiritual development. God’s eye is on the sparrow and on politicians’ smoke-filled rooms.

Prayer

Lord, “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Help us all to recognize you as the King and to aim for your will in all we do. In your name, Amen

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