

# Old Glory

It's interesting as to what are the two most oft' mentioned jobs in the New Testament. Fishermen and centurions. Four and four. Peter, Andrew, James, and John make up the pillars of the apostles. Those who bring in the fish and those who mend the nets. Catching and mending - such is the Church.

But do you know what else there are four of? Four centurions. Four military men. Two honored by Jesus. One Peter. One by Paul. The apostles represent one divine institution – the Church, by which God establishes order. The centurions represent the other- the Government. God wants us to know, “government is My institution”.

“There is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God.” Paul to the Romans

“Fear God, honor the king”..

“...for the punishment of evil doers and the praise of those who do right” Peter from Rome

As a matter of fact, Paul states that our taxes are a tithe because rulers are “servants of God....ministers who devote themselves to this very thing.”

The church converts evil men. The government curtails them.  
They catch 'em, we clean 'em.

Together, we establish order...flawed as both are.

1 Timothy 2:1f says to pray for government.

Titus 3:1f says be a blessing to government, “ready for good deeds”.

Why do I share this? We have a tradition at DBC. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July we recognize and appreciate our government, our freedoms, and most important – those men and women who have placed their lives in harms way. On beaches, land, sea, and air. Those who have lost their lives standing against imperialism, fascism or Nazism, communism and Muslim extremists. Those who have sought out enemies far away that shores could be safe.

I want our young to see our military, to honor them because the day may come.....

And I want them to remember that freedoms are not a given. They may be “sacred rights” but they are not universally experienced or enjoyed. Because only a country with a Christian worldview of human dignity and of absolute righteousness can have a sense of “ought-ness” concerning the expectations of government. I want our young to deeply, emotionally, and intelligently understand that countries such as America are not natural, normal, or commonplace. They are intentional and begin with an absolute outside of man from an infinite and personal God. And those freedoms will be challenged wherever that worldview is not present.

And that is why “we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.... One nation, under God..”

The problem with our country is that we do not measure to what we believe.

With all too many others, it is living out the errors they've embraced.

Someday we will beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. Until that time, as long as there are evil men who ascend to thrones and march on others “to seize what is not theirs” Hab. 2 – freedoms will be defended and preserved only as evil is met head on by “rough men who stand ready”.

Old Glory indeed,  
Tommy