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# A Solemn Bequest

## CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

### 153<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

- **TUESDAY @ 9:00 AM** in 417 CAP
- **TUESDAY @ 12 NOON** in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are held every Tuesday morning at 9:00am in 417 CAP, and again at 12 Noon in 123 CAP. The weekly Bible study is *nonpartisan and non-denominational*. The study for the 2016 General Assembly is the book of First Kings.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. I am here to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

## Capitol Commission Bible Studies

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Tuesday, 19 January 2016

### First Kings 2 – “A Solemn Bequest”

Caring for their children is one of the most sacred trusts that are possessed by parents. Christ Jesus loved children so much that He commanded his disciples, “Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matt 19:14).

Dr. Potter tells the story of a young man who stood at the bar of a court of justice to be sentenced for forgery. The judge had known him from a child, for his father had been a famous legal light and his work on *The Law of Trusts* was the most exhaustive work on the subject in existence. “Do you remember your father,” asked the judge sternly, “that father whom you have disgraced?” The prisoner answered: “I remember him perfectly. When I went to him for advice or companionship, he would look up from his book on *The Law of Trusts* and say, ‘Run away, boy, I am busy.’ My father finished his book, and here I am.” The great lawyer had neglected his own trust with awful results [Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, ed., *Sunday School Journal* 28 (January 1896): 496].

Parental responsibility is vast. For instance, knowing his “time to die drew near,” King David “charged Solomon his son” by exhorting him to be resolute, which would be done by maintaining “the charge

of the LORD,” in addition to walking “in His ways” and keeping “His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies,” for the purpose of being successful in all he would do and wherever he would venture (1 Kgs 2:1-3).

First Kings 2 demonstrates that final words of a father to a son are momentous, especially when political power and the will of God are involved. God’s eminent leaders would characteristically transfer the mantle of their leadership to their successors (e.g. Jacob in Gen 48–49; Moses in Deut 32; Joshua in Josh 23–24). Consequently, the words of David to Solomon convey a solemn commission personally, in addition to expressing practical wisdom for the political realm.

### POLITICAL OFFICE IS A DIVINE GIFT

(1 Kgs 2:1-11) King David was a warrior, and thus his words are characteristic of a battlefield charge: “Be strong, therefore,” and demonstrate maturity (v. 2; cf. 1 Sam 4:9). The next king, Solomon, would display strength and qualities appropriate to his gender (only as he directed his life by God’s revealed Word). *The priority of his life personally, in addition to his stately administration, must be distinguished by commitment to the will of God.*

God providentially installs all leaders (Prov 8:15; Dan 2:21; John 19:11; Rom 13:1); therefore, no official is a law unto self. God’s provision for political leaders, which is salvation and “knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4), means that all officials are bound by divine orders. Recognizing the divine gift entailed in political office, one must “walk in His ways” and uphold God’s commands and decrees, as revealed in the Holy Bible (1 Kgs 2:3; cf. Deut 17:18-20). *The leader’s greatest responsibility is to honor the will and Word of God.*

Recognizing political responsibility as a divine gift results yields several results. *First*, one may be certain that living with “knowledge of the truth” (cf. 1 Tim 2:4) will initiate personal success in all life’s actions and wherever such activities guide. The notion of “success” (1 Kgs 2:3) involves acting with insight and skillfulness, with the result of prospering in all one’s activities. Political and national prosperity would be the consequence from lives of obedience (which is a theme revealed in the subsequent chapters of 1 Kgs).

*Second*, one may attain the blessing of God for subsequent generations (1 Kgs 2:4; cf. Prov 2:11-15; 5:11-14; 22:6; Ezek 18:20). God’s unconditional promise to provide an eternal dynasty for David and his descendants ultimately anticipates the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, God’s Messiah from the line of David (2 Sam 7:11-16); and yet, one may deduce general truths upon specific circumstances from that promise. For instance, many of the biblical proverbs express truths that are necessarily conditioned by prevailing circumstances (cf. Prov 22:3-4; 9, 11; 16, 29). The positive value of biblical obedience is conveyed in the opening verses of 1 Kings 2.



## Capitol Commission Bible Studies

Tuesday (19 January) @ 9:00am - 9:30am, 417 CAP  
Tuesday (19 January) @ 12 Noon - 12:45pm, 123 CAP  
Lunch provided from sponsorship by Common Thread Ministries



Enhancing Trust

*What distinguishes genuine authority in political office?* The answer is recognizing oneself as a minister of God in governing (administering) divinely granted authority. The world belongs to the Lord and includes all within it (Ps 24:1; 1 Cor 10:26); therefore, anyone occupying political office administers authority over God's realm and, thus, not to seek the glory of God does not result in the exercise of stately rule but brigandage. Furthermore, a person is deceived who seeks enduring prosperity in the political realm when God's Word is not applied so as to regulate that sphere. God cannot lie and has declared that the absence of his revelation ("vision") culminates in people who "are unrestrained" (Prov 29:18).

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**... NOT TO SEEK THE GLORY OF GOD DOES NOT RESULT IN THE EXERCISE OF STATELY RULE BUT BRIGANDAGE.**

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## **POLITICAL OFFICE DEMANDS SPIRITUAL OBEDIENCE AND WISDOM**

(1 Kgs 2:12-46) David knew that political office demands spiritual obedience, and, as a realist, was aware that it is also protected with shrewd actions, which are narrated in verses 12-34. Solomon appointed Benaiah as commander of the army (v. 35) because he was a man of significant valor, in addition to having been the captain of David's personal bodyguard (2 Sam 20:23). Benaiah's abiding courage was surpassed only by his enduring loyalty to David. *Courage and loyalty are virtues that should distinguish all those who serve David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

First Kings 2 concludes with Solomon dispersing all those whose heart was not loyal to the kingdom that God established (cf. v. 15b). Thereafter, the kingdom of Solomon was characterized by peace. Likewise, the believer in Jesus will know the peace of God by removing all things from his or her life that is opposed to the lordship of Christ (cf. Rom 8:1-9).

The initial question of the book of 1 Kings concerns "who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him" (1:20). The answer is provided in chapters 1—2. King David's son, Solomon, would sit upon the throne of his father (2:12, 24, 46). The decision was not the result of political maneuvering; rather, it was the outcome of God's will (cf. 1:48; 2:15, 24). Nevertheless, the succession of Solomon to the throne would not occur without conscious thought because significant locales of the kingdom desired a king other than God's choice. By the end of 1 Kings 2, all those threats against the kingdom were removed, and "the kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon" (2:46).

*The greatest threat against Solomon's kingdom, however, still remained: the heart of the king.* Solomon's greatest enemy to his reign was himself. The Lord was unequivocal that Solomon's greatest need was to "keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies" (2:3). God created all human beings in his image (Gen 1:26); therefore, to be fully human is to place oneself under God's authority. Either divine blessing or

judgment would be achieved by the determination of a political leader to "keep the charge of the LORD."

The classic American comic strip, *Pogo*, made the following words famous: "We have met the enemy and he is us." The assertion was most notable as an appropriate summary towards the foibles of humanity and the nature of the human condition. As one reads the end of 1 Kings 2, it would appear that Solomon's rule is well established, yet it will only be assured by the condition of his heart. The primary battle of life is being certain that one maintains a heart of faithfulness to the Lord God, as evident in a lifestyle of obedience.

King David's concluding words to Solomon his son asserted truly that strength is not derived merely from administrative and military dealings, without moral and spiritual vitality. A good leader is not exempted from God's law; rather, he or she is bound to heed it. True and enduring vigor is founded within a person's relation to God and his Word.

There is always a danger in choosing a leader based upon the wrong criteria, which would be charisma and charm, and this folly was evident in the people's approval of Adonijah's political maneuvering (cf. 1:5-27). Furthermore, there is the hazard associated with leadership that is enfeebled or preoccupied because such leaders become irrelevant to present circumstances, which thrusts their followers into divergence and insecurity. While there is a need for leaders to affirm their responsibility, as Solomon did when he ascended the throne, there is *danger in thinking the ends justify the means*. The actions of Solomon demonstrate the negative aspect of leaders who strive to achieve the right thing in the wrong manner (cf. 4:1-28).

*What constitutes godly leadership?* Nathan the prophet is an example of holy activism (1:11-37). Knowing that God has a sovereign purpose does not mean that one waits passively for it to develop. God's people are called to decisive actions that will advance his purposes. Nathan knew the will of God, and thus he acted with boldness, preparedness, and shrewdness. May each of us heed the wisdom of Proverbs 4:23, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it *flow* the springs of life."

*Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the nobility to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.*

### **About Capitol Commission**

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastors-missionaries who teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for legislators, lobbyists, and staff members. The Bible studies are hand-distributed to each legislative office, emailed, and made available throughout the Capitol community. Capitol Commission is a ministry of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message, and to help believers mature through verse-by-verse Bible teaching. In the Bible, we see God's love for the world, especially those who have been placed in authority. This is the foundation for our ministry to you.

The church is instructed to submit and to honor government leaders (Rom 13:1-7), and to pray for their eternal salvation (1 Tim 2:1-4). The desire of Capitol Commission is to witness God transform the hearts and lives of elected officials, lobbyists, and staff members. We apply this mandate to four primary areas of discipleship: (1) *evangelize* those who have not known saving faith in Jesus Christ; (2) *establish* those who desire to grow in their faith and knowledge of Scripture; (3) *equip* those called to spiritual leadership; and, (4) *encourage* churches to participate with us in ministry.

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Tuesday, 26 January @ 9:00am in 450 CAP  
and again (with lunch) @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP