The Kingdom of Heaven is Like Leaven

How Does Christianity Change a Whole Nation?

Mathew 13:33 He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

Luke 13: 20 - 21
"To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

Leaven is most often used as a Negative Metaphor for Corrupting Influences

Matthew 16:6 Jesus said to them, "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Mark 8:15 And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

1st Corinthians 5:7 - 8 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Christianity Changes Whole Nations, One Individual at a Time

- Not by force and violence, not by loud revolutions and riots,
    - But by the quiet, patient, and redemptive power of personal influence, through individual transformations that act as leaven and salt, and little points of light in the dark, that eventually win over a whole culture.
- The weapons of our warfare are *not* carnal, *not* physical, and therefore *not* political,
    - but are made mighty through God to destroy strongholds. (**2nd Cor 10:4**)

1st Peter 2:13 – 14, 17
Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.
Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Should our Preaching Ever Mix with Politics?

"I well remember certain men who were concerned about social and political matters, and who constantly preached on such themes, and packed their chapels for a while, but only as long as they preached politics.
The moment they began to preach the gospel truly the crowds left them.
Politically-minded people are always ready to make use of the church,
but they always abandon and shun her
when she ceases to be of any value to them."
- Martyn Lloyd-Jones

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Interactions Between the 1st Century Church and the Roman Government

Acts 10 - Cornelius the Centurion, Officer of the Italian Cohort in Caesarea
- A devout man to whom an angel appears, commanding him to send men to Joppa
    - Peter is escorted to him by his sent soldiers, and his whole house believes

Acts 13 - Sergius Paulus, the Proconsul (Governor) of the province of Cyprus
- Invites Paul and Barnabas to stand in his court and share their gospel
    - The Proconsul is "astonished at the teaching of the Lord" and believes

Acts 16 - The Magistrates of Phillipi "Little Rome" illegally beat and imprison missionaries
- Paul and Barnabas are both Roman citizens, and so after they reach the jailor and his whole family with the gospel, they appeal to their rights and leave peaceably

Acts 17 - The Roman city authorities in Thessalonica have Jason dragged before them
- Accusations are presented that Christians are insurrectionists, "acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."
    - The Christians pay the cost for their bail and are let go

Acts 18 - Gallio, the Proconsul (Governor) of the province of Achaia
- Paul is dragged before the tribunal and accused of "persuading people to worship God contrary to the law."
    - The Proconsul refuses to judge matters of Jewish law and drives them away

Acts 21 to 23 - Claudius Lysias, Chiliarch (commander) of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem
- The Tribune rescues Paul from a violent temple mob about to tear him to shreds
    - He protects him from an assassination plot by forty Jewish zealots
    - As a Roman Citizen, he has Paul escorted to safety by two hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen

Acts 24 to 25 - Felix and Porcius Festus, Proconsuls (Governors) of the province of Judea
- Both hold tribunal hearings regarding Paul
    - Felix detains Paul for two years, hoping for a bribe
    - Festus seeks to gain political favor with the Jews
        - Paul exercises his right as a Roman citizen and appeals to Caesar

Acts 25 to 26 - King Herod Agrippa II, client-state ruler over territories northeast of Judea
- After hearing Paul in the auditorium of Caesarea, Agrippa remarks that Paul could have been set free had he not appealed to Caesar.

Acts 27 - Julius the Centurion, Officer of the Augustan Cohort
- Placed in charge of escorting Paul to Rome. He comes to highly respect Paul, listens to his warnings from God, and prevents his soldiers from killing their prisoners during a shipwreck off Malta.

1st Timothy 2:1 - 2 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

"*The supreme need of the hour is intense prayer for spiritual revival on the part of Christian people.*"
- Martyn Lloyd-Jones, May 21st, 1943