

## ACCESS, 12/1 - NFL Protests and Patriotism

### **Read:**

Romans 13:1 // <sup>1</sup> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Philippians 3:20 // <sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:31-32 // <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Proverbs 31:9 // <sup>9</sup> Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

### **Big Questions:**

- Why is there such disagreement in the nation over athletes kneeling? How should we view protests like this?
- Where does patriotism fit into our faith or our Christian worldview? How does being a citizen of Heaven interact with being a citizen of America?
- How do we better show compassion on those hurting and suffering in this world?

### **Teaching Points:**

- "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color [...] There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder." -Colin Kaepernick
- While we are subject to the authorities of this world, we are, first and foremost, citizens of heaven, strangers, sojourners, and exiles in this current world.
- We are called as God's people to seek justice, healing, freedom, and comfort.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- What is the intent and motivation behind the NFL protests? What is the way it has been received? Where is the good, neutral, and bad?
- What's your take on the protest, both its message and its execution? Is there a "right" side?
- What is your understanding of free speech in America?
- What is our responsibility as Christians to the State (America)? How does our citizenship of America fit in with our citizenship in the Kingdom of God?
- How should we respond to those who cry out for justice and freedom from oppression? What about when we disagree with their methods?

### **Recommended Resources:**

- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/september/kaepernick-speech-job.html>
- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/september/theres-no-dishonor-in-kneeling-on-colin-kaepernick.html>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/every-knee-shall-bow>
- <https://relevantmagazine.com/article/what-christians-can-learn-from-colin-kaepernick/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/should-christians-be-patriotic>