

## *The Leaning Tower*

In the early 1990s, the leaning Tower of Pisa began to lean too far. Seeing that the 200-foot-high tower would soon become dangerous, engineers designed a system to salvage the 12th Century landmark by holding the lean constant.

First, the engineers injected supercold liquid nitrogen into the ground to freeze it and thereby minimize dangerous ground vibrations during the work that followed. Then they installed cables to pull the structure more upright. The \$30 million project to stabilize the bell tower is being hailed as one of the great engineering feats of all time, making the tower safe for the next 300 years.

This procedure reduced the lean by 20 inches as measured in a horizontal plane at the seventh cornice. This returns the tower to the lean it had in 1838. After 10 years of tower rehabilitation, its ancient key was ceremonially handed back to the church guardians, who climbed the tower's 297 steps.

Left to itself, our world resembles the leaning Tower of Pisa -- tilting and heading toward catastrophe. To prevent total anarchy, God establishes governments to maintain order. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God ... For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil" (Romans 13:1, 3). Governments and their laws function like the steel cables that hold the leaning tower. The tower still leans. It's not perfect. But the cables prevent total destruction.

Today in our community -- and in many other states around the country -- is election day for local governing bodies and state primaries. November 2 is an important day for our country as a whole, because national elections will be held then. It is incumbent upon God's people to seek office, and to support fellow believers who choose to do so, to be certain that those cables are of the highest quality.

--Beecher Hunter