
CHRISTIANS, GOVERNMENT, AND POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

Proverbs 29:2

INTRODUCTION

It's a question that has generated much discussion and even more opinions: Should Christians—even preachers—be involved in politics? We've all heard the old adage, "Politics and Religion don't mix." Remember this, the God of the church is also the God of government! Former Florida State Senator, Dan Jenkins wrote, "The highways of history are strewn with the wreckages of nations that forgot God!"

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- A. God instituted and ordained human _____ as a response to _____ wickedness – Genesis 6:5,6,11,12; 9:5,6
- The fundamental _____ of civil government is to act as a _____ force over fallen man in social relationships!
- B. In Scripture, several of God's people engaged in government and politics, including _____, Nehemiah, David, and _____!
- C. In America's early years, many of our nation's _____ were Christians and were involved in government and politics:
- "Our constitution was made only for a _____ and _____ people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."
--President John Adams
 - "Had the doctrines of _____ been preached always as purely as they came from his lips, the whole world would now have been _____."
--President Thomas Jefferson
 - "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, _____ by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the _____ of Jesus Christ."
--Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia
 - "Providence has given to our people the _____ of their rulers, and it is the duty as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation to select and _____ Christians for their rulers."
--John Jay, First Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

- “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, _____, and _____ are indispensable supports.”
--President George Washington, Farewell Address, 1796

- “I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid! We have been assured, sir, in the Sacred Writings, that ‘except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.’ I firmly believe this, and I also believe that without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel...I therefore beg that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.”
--Benjamin Franklin, Signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution

II. **BURNING ISSUES**

- A. Is the United States a _____?
1. There are five basic _____ of government –
 - a. Monarchy – Ruled by _____!
 - b. Oligarchy – Ruled by a _____!
 - c. Anarchy – Ruled by _____!
 - d. Democracy – Ruled by _____!
 - e. Republic – Ruled by _____!
 2. The _____ part of the American system which is borrowed from “democracy” is the popular _____ of government officials.
 3. The Founders _____ emphasized the republican aspects of the American system.
 4. A _____ places the responsibility for sound government and decision-making on the people’s representatives.
- B. What about the _____ of church and state?
1. The phrase “wall of separation” between _____ and state does _____ appear in the US Constitution!

- Although the word “_____” is, the words “wall”, “separation” and “church” are _____ there!
 - a. The only references to religion in the Constitution are in Article 6(3) prohibiting religious _____ as qualifications for federal office, and in the _____ Amendment...

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”
 - b. The phrase “wall of separation” had its origin in a _____ written by Thomas Jefferson in _____ to the Danbury Baptist Association of Danbury, Connecticut.
 - c. The “wall of separation” that Jefferson referred to was that prohibiting Congress from establishing a _____ church!
2. The Founders of this nation _____ dreamed that separation of church and state meant that God should be separated _____ government...
- The buildings in Washington bear testimony to the belief that _____ in God is the _____ for establishing laws:
 - _____ Monument –
 - The east side of the aluminum capstone atop the monument reads a Latin inscription (“Laus Deo”) which means “Praise be to God.”
 - _____ Memorial –
 - Of the four panels inside the dome, three contain references to God!
 - The _____ Building –
 - The Capitol also houses a Chapel, which contains a stained-glass window depicting George Washington in prayer, under the inscription, “In God We Trust.”
 - The Supreme _____ –
 - The most striking Christian imagery at the Supreme Court building is that of Moses with the Ten Commandments.
 - The _____ of Congress –

- Several Biblical passages are inscribed on the ceiling and walls of the Great Hall of the library, including John 1:5 and Proverbs 4:7.
 - The _____ House –
 - In the State Dining Room, the fireplace mantle contains a prayer written by President John Adams in a letter to his wife:

“I pray to heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this house and all that hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise men ever rule under this roof.”
3. In _____, the very year the Constitution was written and approved by Congress, that same body passed the famous _____ Ordinance:
- “Article 3: Religion, morality, and knowledge, being _____ to good government, and the happiness of mankind...”
4. President John Quincy Adams declared in an 1828 message to _____ that it was his administration’s policy as well as “our duty to use our influence to _____ the Indians to Christianity.” Such policies continued for over 100 years after the First Amendment.
- C. Are local churches allowed to engage in _____ activity?
1. The short answer to that question is _____, with some restrictions!
- a. Under the Internal Revenue Code, all section 501(c)(3) organizations are prohibited from directly or indirectly _____ in, or intervening in, any political _____ on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.
 - b. The infamous Johnson Amendment _____ what tax-exempt organizations such as churches may do in the political arena.
 - c. On May 4, 2017 President _____ signed the “Presidential Executive Order promoting Free _____ and Religious Liberty.”
2. The law, however, does _____ prohibit all political activities!
- a. Pastors are free to teach and preach on _____ and political _____ of concern.

- b. Churches can publish and disseminate “_____” for voters.
- c. Churches can conduct nonpartisan _____ registration.

III. BIBLICAL INSIGHT

A. Three _____ principles:

1. In order to _____ human government, _____ sovereignty is involved – Proverbs 21:1; Jeremiah 18:6-9; Daniel 2:21; Romans 13:1
 - We don't always understand God's sovereign _____ or purpose – Deuteronomy 29:29; Isaiah 55:8,9
2. In order to _____ human government, _____ responsibility is involved – Proverbs 14:34; Luke 19:13
3. A political solution will _____ solve a _____ problem!
 - Sin is the _____ of low morals and _____ behavior – Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10-12; 23; James 1:14-16

B. Christians are to _____ as salt and light – Matthew 5:13,14

1. Salt is a great _____ against moral decay!
2. Light dispels _____ as it enlightens people to Biblical truth and exalts God – Ephesians 6:10-12

C. Christians are to _____ God rather than _____ – Acts 5:29

1. Obedience may lead to _____ – Acts 5:40
2. Obedience may lead to _____ – Acts 12:1-5
3. Obedience may lead to _____ – Acts 7:59

D. Christians should be encouraged to engage in government and the _____ process:

1. In order to help _____ morality and _____ leaders for Christ!
2. In order to share God's Word and wisdom with government _____ - _____!

Lesson 4: Christians, Government, and Political Involvement

3. Because government is _____ in virtually every aspect of our _____!

Whatever makes men good Christians makes them good citizens.

*--Daniel Webster, Former US Senator
and Secretary of State*