

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT VOTING AND POLITICS?

Why is this issue important? Regardless of our political party persuasion, we must consider the issues and character behind the often emotional and misleading political process. How we conduct ourselves through the political season is just as important as the ballots we cast on Election Day.

What does the Bible teach?

Ignore Human Opinions about Government. Don't be swayed by appearances or opinion in politics. We must put aside our tradition and political upbringing, and ensure that our identity is more rooted in Christ than it is in our political party. Our loyalty must be higher to Christ's way, purpose, and truth so that we are not swayed by mere human opinion.

(Mark 12:14) "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God."

Understand God's Purpose in Government. God's "kingdom rules over all" (Psalm 103:19) so we must be not lose hope in the midst of the ups and downs of political life. One day, "every knee will bow...every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:10-11), but until that day, God has instituted government as a form of common grace to both believers and unbelievers. Along with the family, it is a form of societal organization. Government is designed to restrain and deter evil, but also is designed to be a proponent of good (Romans 13:4). Even when governmental authority acts evil, it is still ultimately under God's authority.

(Romans 13:1) "For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God."

John MacArthur - "In whatever of the many forms it exists, civil authority derives directly from God ... No matter what form it takes, no human government at any time in history, at any place on earth, among any people on earth, at any level of society, has ever existed or will ever exist apart from the sovereign authority of God"

- No exceptions. Hitler, Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Middle Ages, Tribes led by Shamans

Know God's Role in Government.

(Hosea 8:4) They made kings, but not through me. They set up princes, but I knew it not.

When governments fear, follow, serve, and obey the Lord "it will be well" (1 Samuel 12:14). When governments disobey and rebel against God's good plans, "the hand of the Lord will be against you and your king" (1 Samuel 12:15).

Biblical Examples of Political Rule.

- Old Testament Law – Moral, Ceremonial, Governmental
- Theocracy – God rules through the prophets
 - Democracy – people rule
- Moses – setting up judges over the tribes

- Joshua 24 – elders, heads, officers, judges
 - Joshua v.15 “choose this day whom you will serve”
 - v.15 “as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”
 - people v.24 “The LORD our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.”
- Kings – people rebelled against God’s plan
- Nation of Israel – conquered
 - Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome
 - “hand of the Lord will be against you and your king”
- King Nebuchadnezzar

(Daniel 5:18, 21) O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness and glory and majesty. ... He was driven from among the children of mankind, and his mind was made like that of a beast, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. He was fed grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom he will.

- King Belshazzar – Babylon - hand writing on the wall – brought down

(Daniel 5:23-26) but you have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven. And the vessels of his house have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored. Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end;

- King Cyrus – Persia – used by God to release the people of Israel

2 Chronicles 36:22-23, Ezra 1 – King Cyrus - Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.’”

The Politician’s Role in Government.

(Romans 13:3) For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad.

- (Isaiah 5:20 ESV) [20] Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

(Romans 13:4) he is God's servant for your good.

- Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, Esther in Persia

(Romans 13:6) For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.

- President = God’s servant, a minister of God
- Regardless of his policies, regardless of his faith or lack thereof

Our Role in Government.

(Romans 13:1) Let every person be subject to the governing authorities

- v.6 To avoid God’s wrath – for the sake of conscience
- Attempt to influence government to be more in line with God’s timeless truths and principles
- Our battle is a spiritual, unseen battle, not merely a battle with flesh and blood
- Fixing governments is not evangelism or discipleship, yet it is a loving action to seek the good of your neighbor, the defenseless, and where you live.

(1 Corinthians 10:24) Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.

(Proverbs 31:8) Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute.

(Jeremiah 29:7) But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Pay Your Taxes, Register to Vote, & Inform Yourself. No matter how our taxes are spent, we have an obligation to diligently pay our taxes. When equipped with the ability to influence one's government by voting, one should make the effort to register and be informed as to the facts. Prayer should be the underlying and foundational approach to seeking a God-honoring government (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

(Mark 12: 17) "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

(1 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."

Obey the Authorities. Do you find yourself complaining more or praying more for your leaders? We are reminded of the influence of honor, obedience and submission to even secular and oppressive authorities (Titus 3:1, 1 Peter 2:13-17) so "that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people" (1 Peter 2:15).

The only allowance for governmental disobedience is when governmental law directly opposes the worship and obedience of God (i.e. Jewish midwives in Egypt refusing to murder newly born male babies, Exodus 1:17; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refusing to worship idols, Daniel 3; Daniel's steadfast praying to God, Daniel 6; Peter & John's refusal to stop preaching the Gospel, Acts 4:18-20).

(Romans 13:2,5) "Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment... Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience."

Vote Wisely. When voting, be sure to avoid decisions based on tradition, stereotypes, emotions, or pride. Instead embrace God's truth and wisdom and make decisions that value the kingdom of God more than the kingdom of man. Realize that neither moralizing society nor politicizing the church is the solution to the world's problems.

The world does not change from the outside in, but from the inside out – through the Gospel (Mark 12:17) "Render...to God the things that are God's."

- Do you spend more effort, time, passion, energy, money, and devotion to convincing others to follow your political persuasion...or to follow your Christ?
- Do you get more worked up watching a debate between politicians...than watching a neighbor, coworker, friend, or family member rebel against God and run full throttle for hell?
- Do you place more hope in America? Or in Christ?

(Matthew 6:33-34) But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.