



Cutting Through the Darkness: Being Christ's Witness When It's Hard



Church & State: The Biblical Role of the Believer in a Secular Government July 2, 2023

What is the role of a believer in today's public square? How involved should a Christian be in government in particular?

The Influence of the Church on the State: Three Failed Views

View #1: Government Should Compel Religion

❖ Response:

- 1) Jesus refused to force people to believe in Him.
 - *Luke 9:54-56*

- 2) True change that will last must begin with the heart of each person.
 - *Jonah 3:5-10*

- 3) It exchanges the sovereignty of God with the government, putting secular rulers in an idolatrous and dangerous position.
 - *Matthew 7:6-11*

- 4) If this practice is applied for Christianity, then it can be applied for other religions as well, depending on who is in office.

View # 2: Government Should Exclude Religion

❖ Response:

1) It removes from the government God's teaching about good and evil.

➤ ***Romans 13:4***

2) It neglects the real understanding behind the First Amendment & "Separation of Church and State."

"Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion,

(ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE)

or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

(FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE)

Three Main Interpretations of 1st Amendment and "Separation of Church & State"

- **Avoidance**
- **Acknowledgment**
- **Accommodation**

3) It fails to realize that laws are generally based on a moral code rooted in a righteous God, even if that God is not corporately worshipped by those subject to the law.

View # 3: Do Evangelism, Not Politics

❖ **Response:**

1) *Most religions compel a change in the individual which will inevitably result in a transformation of society.*

2) *Christians have influenced governments positively throughout history.*

The Biblical View of Christian Influence in Government

Starting with the Right Perspective

➤ *Matthew 22:15–21*

➤ *Romans 13:1*

Biblical Examples of Christian Influence in Government

❖ **Daniel**

➤ *Daniel 4:27*

❖ Other OT examples where believers of God had high positions of governmental influence on pagan nations:

❖ **John the Baptist**

➤ *Matthew 14:3-4*

➤ *Luke 3:18-20*

❖ **Apostle Paul**

➤ *Acts 24:24-25*

Significant Ways for Christians to Influence the Government

- 1) **Know and vote for the principles and values consistent with the faith.**

- 2) **Take a public stand on God's Word about the moral and ethical issues of today.**

- 3) **Engage the Public Square.**