

Christianity and Hot Button Issues

Biblical and Cultural Challenges Christians Must Face

#7 – How Do We Navigate Church and State?

1. Three specific realms God has established (Colossians 1:16-17):

- 1) Church—Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:19-20
- 2) Family—Genesis 1:27-28; Ephesians 6:1
- 3) Government—Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-15; John 19:10-11

2. Government's Realm (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-15; Titus 3:1):

- Punish evil and administer justice
- Praise and encourage good.
- Defend the citizens from external and internal threat.
- Collect taxes for these activities. (Matthew 22:21)

3. The questions to ask on whether Caesar exceeded his realm?

- What authority has God given government? (Roman 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-15)
- Are we to obey Caesar in all things unless and only unless we are personally being asked to sin? (Acts 5:29)
- When and in what ways are we to take action against an evil Caesar? (Matthew 14:3-40)
- How do we know when Caesar has stepped out of his limited realm? (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17)
- Lack of thankfulness: Have we been so comfortable in our past freedoms that we have forgotten the sacrifices that gave us these freedoms? (e.g., COVID restrictions on the freedom to assemble (Hebrews 10:24))
- Has the church lost or given up its voice in calling out Caesar's stepping out of its God-given realm? (Ephesians 5:11-13)

4. Who is the government?

- Federal, state, and local officials?
- Congress, Senate, and State Legislature?
- Government agencies (IRS, CDC, etc.)?
- The President of the United States?
- The Governor of Texas?
- The Supreme Court?
- The law enforcement?
- The Constitution?
- All of the above?
- Answer: "We the people of the United States..."



5. New Testament Examples in Opposition of Government (Ephesians 5:11-13).

- John the Baptist: Matthew 14:3-4; Luke 3:19; Mark 6:20
- Peter's & John's civil disobedience: Acts 4:18-20; Acts 5
- Jesus disobeying or criticizing ruling authorities: Mark 3:1-6; John 2:13-22; 21:12-17; Matthew 23:13-29; John 8:59; Luke 9:9; Luke 13:32.
- Paul's debate with King Agrippa and Roman Governor Felix. Acts 26:27; Acts 24:24-25.

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6. What Has Covid Restrictions Revealed in Christians?

From Anthony Forsyth book: *Caesar and the Church*

- Fear of death.
- A laissez-faire attitude towards church and meeting with the saints.
- A greater desire for comfort than holiness.
- A tolerance for legalism.

My additions:

- Not trusting God?
- Willingness to believe Caesar?
- Willingness to obey Caesar?

7. Why Christians Should Be Involved in Politics:

- How will a secular government learn of its God-given realm?
- How will a people, who have no moral absolutes, learn what is true and right, i.e., moral, if Christians stay silent?
- Be informed on the issues.
- Vote and vote wisely.
- More than vote: "The question is whether someone thinks it is morally right to receive great benefits from a nation, but to give almost nothing in return." Wayne Grudem *Politics: According to the Bible*
- Support candidates who embrace biblical principles.
- Peacefully resist government when it is out of its God-given realm.

8. Resources:

- Books (Available in the KBC Bookstore):
Caesar and the Church: A Biblical Study of Government and Church by Anthony Forsyth.
God vs. Government: Taking a Biblical Stand When Christ & Compliance Collide by Nathan Busenitz and James Coates.
No Reason to Hide and *We Will Not Be Silenced* by Erwin W. Lutzer.
Letter to the American Church by Eric Metaxas.
- Other Books (NOT available in the KBC Bookstore):
Resisting Tyranny: Covid, The Church & Christian Duty by Tim Cantrell.
Politics According to the Bible by Wayne Grudem.
Savior or Servant: Putting Government in Its Place by David W. Hall
- KBC Website: *Founding of America* (PDF) by Scott Christensen
- Magazines and Websites:
World Magazine (also email newsletters on national issues): <https://wng.org/>
Albert Mohler.com (a number of resources): <https://albertmohler.com>
Texas Scorecard (newsletter about Texas issues): <https://subscribe.texasscorecard.com>
First Liberty Institute (Christian legal defense): <https://firstliberty.org>
Alliance Defending Freedom (Christian legal defense): <https://adflegal.org>
- *Guide for Students' Rights in Public Schools* a booklet by Dave Garrison (available directly from Dave)
- *Religious Rights Protection Kits*, First Liberty Institute: <https://firstliberty.org/protection-kits/>