



# Institute for American Christian Citizenship

A Ministry of:



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**NOTE: This is an Level One of a three part manual used as part of the USPC  
Institute for American Christian Citizenship**

# GOD'S PURPOSE OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

## Government – God's Plan vs. Satan's Scheme: Overview

*"We believe the Bible instructs us to build biblical churches and Christian lives, and not to try and force a secular community outside the church to do the same or legislate the same."* So wrote the senior pastor of a respected evangelical church in a Texas suburb in response to other pastors and Christian leaders rising up to oppose an ordinance that granted special legal status and protections to immoral sexual behaviors and gender confusion. In that short excerpt and his lengthier blog posting, this pastor displayed an all-to-common "straw man" misrepresenting Scripture and ignoring the history of the Christian church.

Consider a few common questions that resonate from both pulpit and pew in America:

- What is the Biblical role of the individual believer regarding civil government in the United States of America as well as that of The Church as a body?
- Is it true that we cannot "legislate morality?"
- Is taking a pacifist position toward governing bodies at city, county, state and federal levels the more "righteous" and "compassionate" action?
- Does "political involvement" harm the evangelistic efforts of individuals or churches?
- Is it the Pastor's, individual believer's or the church body's "business" what happens at City Hall, the State Capitol or Washington D.C.?
- **Is there a God-given mandate for Christians to vote in elections in which we choose people for government offices from the school board to the White House?**

Without claiming to have the final and all-encompassing, Biblically-correct answer we will address these questions directly and challenge those who disagree to likewise defend their differences with a sound Biblical, legal and historical basis. The first step is to establish some basic parameters or presuppositions that dictate our beliefs, values and actions.

First things first. We believe that answers to every life principle, question, dilemma or problem facing mankind are contained in the Holy Scriptures and that scripture alone, without supplement, provides the only valid basis upon which to determine that which is sinful or righteous, moral or immoral, right or wrong. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Second, we assert that the concept of governing stewardship was given by God in what Dr. D. James Kennedy called the Cultural Mandate (Genesis 1:27-30), affirmed by Jesus (Matthew 8:9), it's first principles confirmed (Genesis 9:6), parameters of equal justice provided (Exodus 21) and its ultimate accountability in all forms to Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God, via the "preamble" to the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18 and applied to all times and places via Romans 13:1-10.

The simple – and correct – interpretation of all this is that all authority comes from the throne of God in the spiritual realm, flows to His appointed stewards responsible for His creation in the physical realm, assigned to followers of Jesus Christ as part of our mandate and the institutional separation confirmed as per Matthew 22:21.

“Separation of Church and State” properly means that each institution has a distinct jurisdiction. The Church is to serve as the means by which the spiritual, moral, physical and philosophical needs of individuals are to be served, The State/government is to serve to restrain and punish those who would violate the life, health, property or freedom of another. The sword of lethal force to enforce the civil laws is properly placed only in the institution of civil government but cannot be separated from God’s laws of morality and justice.

Applying these principles to the Constitutional Republic that is the United States of America, the framers, signers and those who ratified the U.S. Constitution drafted in 1787 and the “corporate bylaws” of the nation asserted an historic principle that was being dusted off after 3,000 years.

Self-government. Government of the people, by the people, for the people.

### *Common Christian Questions Related To “Politics”:*

- What is the Biblical role of the individual believer regarding civil government in the United States of America as well as that of The Church as a body?
- Is it true that we cannot “legislate morality?”
- Is taking a pacifist (non-involvement) position toward governing bodies at city, county, state and federal levels the more “righteous” and “compassionate” action?
- Does “political involvement” harm the evangelistic efforts of individuals or churches?
- Is it the Pastor’s, individual believer’s or the church body’s “business” what happens at City Hall, the State Capitol or Washington D.C? Does God care?

“Separation of Church and State” properly means that each institution has a distinct jurisdiction.

- *The Church* is to equip and mobilize the body of Christ for effective service in taking the Gospel to the world and redeeming the world around us, including the prophetic role assuring accountability in government to God’s standards.
- *The State/government* is to protect the life, property and freedom of the innocent and punish those who would violate those rights.

## BASIS BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

INTRODUCTION: As we walk through the following sequence of scriptures there is a distinct and evident set of principles that this verses highlight only, yet provide a very clear path to understanding of God’s intended purpose for the legitimate use of governing AUTHORITY.

Governing is the exercise of God's authority so please follow carefully because the lack of a biblical view of this topic has caused tragic results with life and death consequences in the lives of our people!

1. \_\_\_\_\_ - "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

**Principle:** Since all creation and its order are designed by, for and through God, it is self-evident that Scripture speaks to every aspect of life including His purpose for governing authority.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ - "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, *'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'*"

**Principle:** God created man and embedded in us His character qualities with a perfect balance of justice and mercy, to be a steward/caretaker over the physical creation and all in it.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ - "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man."

**Principle:** God reminded us that the flood did not eradicate sin and declared that murder was still in the hearts of men. This passage also affirms that the highest purpose of civil authority is to protect innocent life as well as provide for punishment equal to the crime of capital murder.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ - "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place *these* over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.

**Principle:** The specific four-fold standard given by God to choose men or women for governing ministry at any level is based on capability, faith, integrity and character. Carelessly choosing the unqualified, the ungodly, the dishonest or the self-interested will always result in tyrannical and corrupt government. This passage among many prove that God cares and has spoken to us.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ - "But if there is *any further* injury, then you shall appoint *as a penalty* life for life, <sup>24</sup> eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, <sup>25</sup> burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."

**Principle:** The basis of equal justice under civil law is that the punishment for a crime must fit its severity – e.g. we don't use capital punishment for petty theft.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ - "<sup>6</sup> But the thing was <sup>[a]</sup> displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, *'Give us a king to judge us.'* And Samuel prayed to the Lord. <sup>7</sup> The Lord said to Samuel, *'Listen*

to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.”(emphasis added)

Principle: The people sought protection, security and provision from an earthly, human king and wrongly giving him the centralized authority properly reserved only for God.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ – “So Samuel spoke all the words of the Lord to the people who had asked of him a king. <sup>11</sup> He said, ‘This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you.’”

**Principle:** When the people their trust in and yield their rights to another man or government to provide what only God can and should, the fruits are tyranny.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ – “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.”

Principle: Godly governing protects the life, liberty and property of the innocent, while evil men and women abuse governing to authority steal, kill and destroy.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ – “But Samuel said, ‘What have you done?’ And Saul said, ‘Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the appointed days...I forced myself and offered the burnt offering.’ Samuel said to Saul, ‘You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God...now your kingdom shall not endure.’”

Principle: The jurisdiction of the spiritual and moral condition of the people was given to “The Church”; the king/government has no authority in that domain.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ – “For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”

Principle: Authority is an intangible power from the heavenly/spiritual domain that has tangible and measurable impact in the earthly/physical domain.

11. \_\_\_\_\_ – “They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He said to them, ‘Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.’”

Principle: There is a legitimate “separation of church and state” that is clearly ordained by God and unique to Judeo-Christian nations....government has no authority over the beliefs and religious practices of the people unless they violate the rights of others.

12. \_\_\_\_\_ – “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

Principle: All authority over all creation and in the spiritual domain is in and from Jesus Christ. Earthly civil authority, regardless of time and people, only comes from God and is accountable to God, His laws and His justice. (See John 19:11)

13. \_\_\_\_\_ – Jesus answered, " You would have no ***authority*** over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has *the* greater sin."

Principle – The authority to govern (Pilate/governor) was given by God, NOT Caesar/king, therefore all who wield governing authority – We The People - are accountable to God for decisions.

14. \_\_\_\_\_ – Every person is to be in subjection to the governing **authorities**. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.... Do you want to have no fear of ***authority***? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear ***the sword*** for nothing; for it is a minister of God an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil."

Principle: Christian citizens in particular should be respectful and obedient to civil authority when it is conducted within its boundaries to be “minister for good” and a “terror for evil”. Civil government is a servant of God’s purpose, entrusted with “the sword” (use of lethal force) and is not due unlimited obedience if leaders or laws violate God’s laws.

15. \_\_\_\_\_ - First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in **authority**, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- a. **Principle** – This admonition by God through Paul points to the powerful truth that the actions of those in governing authority can harm or destroy a “tranquil and quiet life” so much a desire of every heart; therefore our prayers for those in governing authority who are saved to be guided and those who are not to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ.

***BONUS SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 2:13-17*** - “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority,<sup>14</sup> or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.<sup>15</sup> For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.<sup>16</sup> Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.

<sup>17</sup> Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

**PRINCIPLE: Christians should be the BEST, MOST ACTIVE citizens!**

# EVERY ELECTION HAS 100% VOTER PARTICIPATION

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Since Romans 13 uses the analogy of “the sword” to illustrate the lethal force biblically given to rightful governing **authority**; since in the USA “We the People” are the governing **authority**; since we transfer that **authority** to a fellow citizen to make laws in government by our vote; since those representatives give **authority** to our law enforcers; since our law enforcers in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America do not carry swords as standard issue but rather a semi-automatic handgun (i.e. 9 mm Glock)...therefore the Badge/handgun is a legitimate illustration of THE VOTE/GOD’S AUTHORITY.

Your Vote =



To Whom will YOU give YOUR GUN? EVERY Christian Will Vote in EVERY Election in one of these four methods:

1. Wiping down the prints, filing off the serial number; toss gun into the street: Those who don't register and don't vote. The gun/authority doesn't go away just because you don't show up...who picks it up?
2. Leaving the serial number on, the toss gun into the street: Registered to vote but never or rarely cast a vote. The gun/authority doesn't go away...
3. Registering gun, giving gun based on self-serving reasons: Vote like Dad voted; blind political party allegiance, race, “pocketbook” benefits, etc. All surface, nothing to do with principles, character, etc.
4. Prayerfully, entrusting our gun to man or woman based on Exodus 18:21 – Able, Fear God, Love Truth, Hate Dishonest Gain. What would government look like with capable, God-loving, honest and selfless people in each office?

**It's Not Politics, It's MINISTRY!**

**Basics of Church Voter Ministry (Introduction to Level Two):**

**Four Levels of Christian Citizenship**

**LEVEL 4 - GOVERN AND LEAD – FEW!**

**LEVEL 3 - RUN AND STAND – SOME!**

**LEVEL 2 - WORK AND SERVE – MANY!**

**LEVEL 1 - PRAY AND VOTE – ALL!**

**Four Levels of Church Voter Engagement**

- 1. Voter PREParation**
- 2. Voter REGistration**
- 3. Voter INFORMAtion**
- 4. Voter ACTivation**

For information hosting or joining an Advanced Institute for American Christian Citizenship for pastors and church leaders please contact us at:



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