

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERNMENT by HOWARD R. MCKENZIE

I. Christians Relationship to Government.

- A. **Submission.** Rom 13:1 “Be subject unto the higher powers.” Kingdom’s citizens were called subjects. I Peter 2:13: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake...”
1. **Exception:** Acts 4:18, 19 “And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.”
 2. **Interpretation:** Obey law as intended and enforced.
 - a. Tax law is intended and enforced to require exact amount due.
 - b. Speed limits are intended and enforced to consider conditions, instruments, and limited mercy.
 3. **Retribution:** Romans 13:4, 5 Government has enforcement rights.
 - a. Obey for the sake of conscience.
 - b. Obey to avoid punishment.
 4. **Objection:**
 - a. Right of appeal. Acts 22:25 “And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?”
 - b. Don’t drag church into court unnecessarily. 1Cor 6:1 “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?”

B. Obligation

1. **Taxes.** Mk 12:17 “And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s. And they marveled at him. Mt 17:27 “Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.”
2. **Respect.** Romans 13:7 above “Honor to whom honor.”

II. Christian’s Duty to Influence Government

- A. **Pray.** 1Tim 2:1 “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life.”
- B. **Be Salt & Light.** Matt 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. (16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, & glorify your Father which is in heaven.
- C. **Put good people in office.** Pr 14:34 “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” (29:2) “When the righteous are in authority... people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.”

III. Christians’ Methods to Influence Government.

A. Educate others.

1. Elected officials/bureaucrats: letters, calls, visits, & letters to editor.
2. Electorate: posters, signs, phone banks, letters to editor, attend meetings.

B. Vote.

1. Primaries are important to help get the best candidates.
2. Mr. Rumminger of “Christian Viewpoint” in SC:
 - a. “Politics is a dirty or clean as the people in it.”
 - b. God determines the end but we don’t know the methods He will use-maybe you.
 - c. Pray like everything depended upon God because it does & work like everything depended on you—Bob Jones Sr.
 - d. Rate candidates on a range of moral and personal character issues then vote for best, or lesser of two evils, or not at all.
 - e. Support best available & pressure toward good—Reagan & Bush I were pro-choice until educated.

IV. Issues That Matter.

- A. Life: abortion, euthanasia, cloning, fetal stem cell research, etc.
- B. Marriage, civil unions, gay adoption, sensitivity training in schools, hate crimes etc.
- C. Decency, pornography, FCC, Fairness Doctrine.
- D. Sovereignty: UN Convention on the Child, treaties so US business can be fined by internationals.
- E. Education: extreme sex ed without parental right to interfere, attempts to deny Christian/private/home schooling, evolution as fact.
- F. Religious freedom, public display of scripture, flags, etc.
- G. Taxation, immigration, terrorism, justices, gambling.