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Sermon Notes

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The Christian and Government, Part 3

Romans 13:1-7

Introduction: The Man Without a Country

It is difficult to find a tale charged with a stronger patriotism than that found in Edward Everett Hale's moving short story "The Man Without a Country." Written in 1863 at the height of the Civil War, Hale's passion for the United States of America breathed in the compelling narrative of Philip Nolan. Nolan was a lieutenant in the American Army who was unjustly tried for treason in 1807. During the trial, he cried out "Curse the United States! I wish I may never hear of the United States again." The court was shocked, since many of those there were among those who had suffered and risked everything in the American Revolution. The judge icily granted Nolan's wish and exiled him to sail for the rest of his life on a series of Navy vessels, the sailors commanded never to mention the United States or give him any news of his former country.

Though defiant at first, by the end of his life Nolan bitterly regretted his rash words. A painful moment occurred for him when he overheard someone reading Sir Walter Scott's famous lines:

*Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said
'This is my own, my native land!'
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand*

And again, Nolan suffered greatly when some men on a captured slave ship begged through a translator, "Take us home, take us to our own country."

By the end of his life, Nolan was the most ardent patriot America had ever seen, though he was never again permitted to hear her name. He had a flag draped shrine in his stateroom, and spoke these words to a young sailor with intensity stronger than the sun:

"For your country, boy, and for that flag (as he pointed to the ship's flag.) Never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you, though the service carries you through a thousand hells. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters you or abuses you, never look at another flag, never let a night pass but you pray God to bless that flag. Remember boy that behind all these men..., behind officers and government, and people even, there is the

Country Herself, your Country, and that you belong to her as you belong to your own mother. Stand by her, boy, as you would stand by your mother...!”

Hale’s intense patriotism is reflected in many hearts even today

But the Bible calls us to a higher patriotism... to a higher level of citizenship

- It starts with understanding our true “own native land”
- It starts with understanding we are “Aliens and strangers” in this world, just passing through
- It starts with realizing Jesus is our true King, His Kingdom is our true country
- It starts with living a life of faith that sees a future country, a heavenly one, described about the people of faith in Hebrews 11

Hebrews 11:13-16 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country-- a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

The city of God, the heavenly country is our true home

Our fellow citizens are true believers in Christ from every tribe and language and people and nation

We have more in common with a Christian from Nigeria or Russia or China than we do with a non-Christian from America

Truly understanding these things flows from a proper understanding of Romans 13:1-7, and our relationship to earthly government

I. Government in the Bible: Basic Principles

- A. God is Lord of Heaven and Earth
- B. God Delegates Some of His Authority to Created Beings
- C. God Will Judge Both Governors and Subjects
- D. God Sovereignly Rules Over Both Governors and Subjects
- E. Good Government is a Blessing from God: Romans 13
- F. Bad Government is a Curse from the Devil: Revelation 13

Question: How is a Spirit-filled Christian supposed to live related to human governments while on the earth?

Romans 13:1-7 gives two great commands

- 1) Submit to Human Government
- 2) Give to Human Government whatever you owe it: taxes, respect, honor

Now we are left with some complex ethical questions that find their root in Romans 13

Christians throughout history have argued over these questions

My purpose this week and next week is to survey the terrain of these questions... not to resolve every issue but to give you a sense of what convictions Christians have had over the centuries... and to humble you and cause you to seek God for yourselves... and to help you not to judge other Christians who have different convictions... and especially to cause you to yearn for the day when Christ will put an end to all human government and set up His eternal Kingdom

II. Six Key Ethical Questions

- A. Limits to Obedience: Is submission to government absolute or are there limitations?

Acts 4:18-19 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God."

The key is that it was impossible both to obey them AND God because God had specifically commanded them to speak and teach in Christ's name

1. Summary

- a. Submission to government is not absolute
- b. When government forces us to disobey God's commands, we must refuse, we must disobey government in order to obey God

B. Christians and War: Should a Christian fight for secular governments?

1. Two difficult case studies that lead in opposite directions

- a. Imagine you come upon a situation in which an innocent man was being bludgeoned to death by some muggers; in effect, you've come upon the scenario Jesus describes in the parable of the Good Samaritan WHILE the crime is being committed. How could you rescue the man without using force? And if you decided that force was the only way to rescue the man, is it godly to kill the criminals in the act of the crime?

- b. Imagine you came upon two Christians who were arguing bitterly and you knew them both very well... wouldn't you try to separate them? What if they proceeded to pull out weapons and wanted to kill each other... would your desire to separate them and end the conflict not INCREASE. BUT if they are wearing the uniforms of opposing countries in a war, does it suddenly become OKAY for Christians to kill each other
 - c. The first scenario leads to the acceptability of Christians serving as soldiers in a just war
 - d. The second scenario leads to one form of pacifism or another in which serving as soldiers in a war may lead you actually to try to kill a brother in Christ
 - i) WWI: Celebration of Christmas in No-man's land, followed by resumption of hostilities
 - ii) Long-standing problem: American Civil War, most European wars of the last five centuries
 - e. Absurdity #1: The Good Samaritan standing idly by waiting for the robbers to finish with the man so that he can begin nursing him back to health
 - f. Absurdity #2: The Holy Spirit helping you to aim at and kill another Spirit-filled Christian, while he is seeking to do the same to you
 - g. These opposite absurdities lead us to the problems of Christians involved in war
2. Various views on Christian participating in war
- a. Activism: a Christian ought to participate in any war engaged in by his government because government is ordained by God
 - b. Pacifism: a Christian ought never participate in war in the killing of others because God has commanded men not to take the lives of others; or because it produces actions not consistent with the Spirit-filled Christian life and with the Great Commission
 - c. Selectivism: a Christian ought to participate in some wars—the just ones—and the Christian is responsible under God to determine for himself what those wars are
3. Old Testament evidence
- a. Abraham went to war to rescue his nephew, Lot, in Genesis 14

- b. God clearly commands Israel to participate in war as an agent of His wrath against ungodly nations
- c. God judges Samuel for refusing to carry out His command against the Amalekites completely
- d. God blesses David in killing Goliath, who was blaspheming God
- e. David celebrates God's training of his hands for war

Psalm 144:1 Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle.

- f. Nehemiah rebuilds the wall of Jerusalem with a sword in one hand and the trowel in the other
- g. God blesses Israel in defeating their enemies at many places in their history
- h. From all this it is clear that, in the Old Testament at least, participation in warfare by the people of God is not inherently evil

4. New Testament

- a. Nowhere is this openly contradicted... there are no commands anywhere for Christians not to be involved in warfare
- b. Actually, John the Baptist gave some soldiers restrictions about carrying themselves morally as they go about their lives as soldiers
- c. Christ used a military analogy about counting the cost

Luke 14:31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?"

- d. At the end of the Book of Revelation and at the end of the world, Christ is pictured as a mighty conquering king invading earth with an army
- e. Hebrews 11 celebrates the faith of Old Testament warriors

Hebrews 11:32-34 And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.

- f. The Apostle Paul uses military analogy for the Christian life being like the life of a soldier

2 Timothy 2:3-4 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs-- he wants to please his commanding officer.

g. BUT some key changes as well:

- i) Christ's example as the Prince of Peace who did not call on twelve legions of angels to fight for Him, and who went like a sheep to the slaughter
- ii) Christ's statement to Pilate that His Kingdom is not of this world, or else His servants would fight for Him
- iii) Christ's commands in the Sermon on the Mount not to resist an evil person and to turn the other cheek
- iv) Paul's statement that our warfare is now spiritual, not worldly

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- h. ALSO the worldwide advance of the gospel to people from every tribe and nation makes New Testament warfare different from OT... it bring us to that uncomfortable absurdity of Christians going to war with each other
- i. The Gospel ministry is worldwide... to every tribe and tongue and nation
- j. Gospel success in every nation makes the prospect of Christians killing each other a greater possibility

5. C.S. Lewis

- a. 1941 published a strong tract concerning Christian involvement in warfare
- b. Said "The Christian faith has produced two responses to the problem of warfare: **1) pacifism; 2) chivalry**
- c. He said pacifism was a mistake, but an honest one... in which pacifists leave the dirty work to their neighbors
- d. Chivalry conjured up the image of righteous Sir Lancelot or Galahad, fighting the just war in a just way
- e. This was during the last clear "just war," the fight against Hitler and Naziism

- f. Most Christians hold to the selectivist viewpoint, that we should be involved in just wars of our own determination... but that we should resist involvement in wicked actions by our government... Chivalry means the JUST WAR MUST BE FOUGHT IN A PERFECTLY JUST WAY.
 - i) BUT only a just society can identify just wars and produce chivalrous soldiers... who act with perfect meekness and perfect fierceness depending on the circumstances
 - ii) This includes soldiers disobeying unjust commands on the battlefield, like bombing civilian targets or slaughtering Prisoners of War
 - iii) Thus Christians should be willing to defy unjust orders at any time, for the higher principle; to be court-martialed for defying an unjust battlefield command is a Christian soldier's glory and duty, more even than dying for his country

- g. My strongest argument for Christian involvement in warfare is the need for Christians to be salt and light to prevent immoral decisions and actions in war... without Christians acting as salt to retard the spread of corruption, the gung-ho blind patriotism of Marines and Bomber Pilots and Rangers and Navy Seals and covert operatives coupled with their overwhelming weapon systems and their natural violence could result in great wickedness

- h. My strongest argument for Christians not being involved in warfare is the ever-increasing complexity of the modern scene... urban fighting against non-uniformed terrorists who use women and children as shields or even participants makes fighting with chivalry extremely difficult

C. Limits to Opposition: Is armed opposition to government ever permissible?

- 1. The American Revolution
 - a. Christian Tories argued that colonists had to submit to the British crown
 - b. To advocate revolution was to go in direct contradiction to Romans 13
 - c. John MacArthur has recently argued this point
 - d. He claims that the American Revolution was a violation of what Paul commands in Romans 13
 - e. Others argue that King George himself was under authority and he was violating that authority

- f. The cry “No taxation without representation” is based on British Common Law, founded on the Magna Carta, enhanced by the settlement of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 which limited the power of the crown and made it accountable to Parliament
- g. HOWEVER the question is not one of peaceful demonstration or vocalizing dissent... BUT OF ORGANIZED ARMED REVOLUTION against the lawful authority
- h. Did the Patriots of 1776 have the right to set up a whole new government because King George III had broken the covenant with the colonists?
- i. The debate still rages on today

2. Twentieth Century Issues

a. Naziism: Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer had to wrestle with the competing claims of submission to government, then ruled by Adolph Hitler and the Nazis, and his duty to God; he decided that conscience demanded that he actively work to oppose Hitler; he joined a secret underground group of conspirators who plotted to assassinate Hitler; when the plot failed and Bonhoeffer’s role was uncovered, he was sentenced to death... he was hanged a mere three weeks before the end of the war in Europe
- During WWII, partisans in occupied countries like France and Yugoslavia organized and fought against the Germans even though they were technically the lawful power

b. Communism

- Many Christians have felt called to take up arms against communist governments around the world... whether in Korea or China or Vietnam or Eastern Europe; they justified their involvement by citing the openly godless doctrines of communism

3. Answers

- a. Similar to questions of pacifism
- b. Pacifist views: Christians are never to take up arms or weapons to kill another person period; Christians are to do the work of the Kingdom, and leave the war and revolution to the ungodly
- c. Just-war views: Christians are permitted to take up arms to fight if the cause is just; even in the case of revolution... if the lawfully established government behaves in an unlawful or ungodly manner, Christians should be allowed to revolt, even to the point of taking up arms
- d. These extend to questions of revolution as well

- e. Anabaptist brothers and sisters have argued that real change can take place in societies by non-violent means of demonstration and dissent

Key question: Why is there no example of any encouragement by New Testament writers to overthrow the wicked Roman Empire? They were certainly taxed without representation!!

Paul shows how he was still submissive even to the wicked high priest Ananias:

Acts 23:1-5 Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day." ² At this the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth. ³ Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!" ⁴ Those who were standing near Paul said, "You dare to insult God's high priest?" ⁵ Paul replied, "Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: 'Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people.'"

Summary: There is no clear command or example of armed revolution in the New Testament. Even the "rights" described in our Bill of Rights are more privileges than rights, since all have sinned and deserve eternal judgment.

One cannot argue from the responsibility each Christian has to resist an evil command to a responsibility a Christian may have to overthrow a wicked government

However, some Christians have felt that an unlawful breach of the pattern in Romans 13 (government as servant of God) makes it an illegitimate government, making it acceptable to wrest power by force of arms

D. Capital Punishment: Does government have the right to take human life?

1. Simply put, yes

Romans 13:3-4 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

2. Definition: Capital punishment = execution under legal authority as the punishment for a crime
3. Old Testament laws filled with capital punishment

- a. Mount Sinai: death penalty right at the beginning... if anyone touched the mountain he was to be put to death
- b. Many capital crimes

Exodus 21:12 "Anyone who strikes a man and kills him shall surely be put to death.

Exodus 21:15-17 "Anyone who attacks his father or his mother must be put to death. ¹⁶ "Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him or still has him when he is caught must be put to death. ¹⁷ "Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.

- 4. Arguments against capital punishment
 - a. Israel was a unique nation... a theocracy... and its laws cannot be reduplicated here
 - b. Christ's death has removed the need for capital punishment
 - c. Christ's behavior toward the woman caught in adultery shows the pattern of mercy triumphing over judgment
 - d. Some Christians simply point to the Ten Commandments, "You shall not kill"... but this is actually a prohibition against MURDER
 - e. ALSO: they say that capital punishment is frequently unjustly applied (more to minorities) and (of course) there's no way to fix an error if a person is unjustly executed
 - f. Finally, they argue that capital punishment is no deterrent

But the Bible clearly refutes this:

Deuteronomy 13: If anyone leads you to worship a false God..."

Deuteronomy 13:11 Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and no one among you will do such an evil thing again.

E. Christians Participating in Government: How much and in what manner may a Christian participate in government?

Some Christians have openly embraced a union of church and state... a direct role of Christians in secular government, a desire to see as much of the Kingdom of God enacted in the laws of the state as possible:

- Constantine shaped the church along the lines of the Roman Empire

- Charlemagne, who crafted a unity of the Frankish kingdom and the church, making a monolithic medieval Christian culture in Europe called Christendom
- John Calvin, who shaped Geneva Switzerland to be as close to a theocracy as possible
- Abraham Kuyper, Dutch Reformed scholar, professor, church leader who served as Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1901-1905; his famous quote sums up his political views:

"THERE IS NOT A SQUARE INCH IN THE WHOLE DOMAIN OF OUR HUMAN EXISTENCE OVER WHICH CHRIST, WHO IS SOVEREIGN OVER ALL, DOES NOT CRY: 'MINE!'"

However, there are other Christians who have strongly opposed involvement of the church in secular government. We as Baptists should be familiar with our Anabaptist forerunners, who strongly advocated the separation of church and state in the 16th century and paid the price of martyrdom at the hands of both Catholic and Protestant persecutors alike

The Schleithem Confession of 1527, the earliest Anabaptist statement of faith, participation in government was condemned, for governments are **“armed with steel and iron, but the Christians are armed with the armor of God, with true, righteousness, peace, faith. . . .”**

It was Baptists who greatly influenced the founding fathers of the United States of America, as they were framing the Constitution, to make a strong statement of the freedom the church should have from governmental coercion... what is mistakenly interpreted as an iron wall of separation between religion and politics was originally merely the non-establishment clause of the United States Constitution

Anabaptists and Baptists and other Christians have thus thought it wrong for Christians to get involved in secular government, for our business is with the gospel... other Christians have felt it was their duty to claim all of the world and its institutions for Christ

1. Anabaptists have argued for a complete separation of church and state
 - a. They feel that a Christian has no right or responsibility to participate in government
 - b. Based on the sermon on the Mount, they argue against any form of resistance of evil

Matthew 5:38-39 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'
³⁹ ***But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.***

The foundation of this non-participation in government is that otherworldly stance of the Christian: ALIENS AND STRANGERS IN THIS WORLD

According to Hebrews 11:13-16, the life of faith is essentially admitting that we are aliens and strangers on the earth, and should not get involved in earthly government

2. However, most Christians have felt it was acceptable to be as involved in government as possible
 - a. The Bible states that we should pray for the conversion of governors and kings
 - b. Daniel and Joseph as examples of godly government officials in ungodly governments
 - c. Since the time of Constantine, the idea of a Christian king or emperor was central to European Christianity... "Christendom"
 - d. Until the Enlightenment, most European nations claimed to be Christian and were run by people who at least outwardly bent the knee to Christ
 - e. BUT Anabaptists pointed out that so-called Christian nations behaved little differently than pagan nations

3. America: representative democracy
 - a. We have the freedom and right to influence our government and society
 - b. Some Christians spend their full time lobbying Congress on abortion or euthanasia or the rights of Christians in persecuted countries
 - c. Stewardship: Real question is how much time and resource should be invested in secular government
 - d. There has been a rather unpleasant public debate between John MacArthur and James Dobson on Christian involvement in government
 - e. MacArthur argues in his book *Why Government Can't Save You* that the best Christian response to abortion, homosexuality, drug abuse, and other symptoms of moral decline in America is to preach the gospel

Key quote:

"God does not call the church to influence the culture by promoting legislation." John MacArthur, *Why Government Can't Save You*

Key support: NT teaching that righteousness does NOT come by the law

Galatians 3:21 For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

- f. Dobson responded by urging Tom Minnery, vice president of Focus on the Family to write a book *Why You Can't Stay Silent* ... that book argues that Christians MUST speak out and get involved in the government process to the maximum amount because that is how we can be salt and light
- g. Big problem with the political solution: it generally causes Christians to work closely together with others who do not share our same convictions about Christ and the gospel

Phil Johnson: "When your political agenda involves forming alliances with Mormons, Moslems, Jehovah's Witnesses, Moonies, and all kinds of humanistic moralists, you simply cannot afford to speak frankly about the exclusivity of Christ--it's an issue you can't bring up. You have to stifle the truth about justification by faith alone, because Roman Catholics, who are your political allies reject that doctrine. You're better off, in fact, not to mention the name of Christ at all, because Jewish people, who are our political allies, are sensitive about that, and so the gospel is stifled as a consequence whenever people become political activists, they begin to trim away the offensive parts of the gospel. It is the natural and inevitable consequence of moving the fight to the political arena--happens all the time."

- 4. Summary: Christians have a responsibility to be salt and light in this society and to combat the spread of evil... we can do that by being involved to a degree in secular government; but direct involvement in secular government by Christians may end up being a sink hole, diverting hours of effort in affecting, at best, a change of legislation, without changing any hearts... all the while tempted to compromise the gospel
 - a. the shaping of a just society by human government is unattainable
 - b. Ultimately, government only exists to restrain evil so the gospel can advance
 - c. Some Christians will be called to participate in that, and that calling must be respected
 - d. BUT most Christians will not be called on to invest the majority of their time in government

F. Persecuted Christians: What should Christians do about governments who persecute Christians?

- 1. More Christians were martyred in the 20th century than all the other 19 centuries combined
- 2. Many governments are actively persecuting Christians today

3. The New Testament is filled with encouragements to Christians suffering active persecution by the surrounding government
 - a. A hostile relationship between Christianity and human government has actually been the norm for 20 centuries
 - b. Therefore, there are many words encouraging Christians in times of persecution

Matthew 10:17-20 "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

- c. American Christians have had, for the most part, a good relationship with secular government for the history of our country
- d. However, it could very well be that in our lifetime, that relationship will deteriorate and Christians may be openly persecuted for their faith
- e. We may be arrested for preaching the gospel or for failing to embrace laws or regulations they force upon us
- f. Then we have to stand firm and be willing to suffer for our faith as many of our brothers and sisters around the world are presently doing: in Muslim countries like Iran, Sudan and Indonesia, in Communist countries like North Korea and China, in staunchly secular countries like in Europe
- g. And we who are not actively persecuted should pray for those who are being attacked by their governments

Hebrews 13:3 Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

- h. And we can support them financially through groups like Persecution Project and Voice of the Martyrs

III. Summary and Application

- A. We have surveyed the incredibly complex relationship between the Spirit-filled Christian and secular government
- B. We have seen that Paul gives two general commands:

Submit to God-ordained authorities

Support God-ordained authorities with taxes, revenue, respect and honor

- C. We have considered a variety of difficult cases of conscience of the Christian and government
- D. This was meant to be suggestive of the issues facing Christians
- E. Two Main Applications:

- 1. Romans 14: Do not judge someone else's servant

Romans 14:4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

- a. Very easy for both sides of Christian involvement/non-involvement with government issue to judge the other side
- b. Separatists, Anabaptist groups like the Amish can be tempted to judge Christians that get very involved in government or in wars
- c. Patriotic, flag-waving Americans can be very tempted to judge others who do not join their enthusiasm for our secular government; Christians who are heavily involved in lobbying efforts on abortion or school prayer or Ten Commandment statues in courtrooms can resent other Christians who refrain and simply preach the gospel
- d. Either side could be right... and you have to make your decision on where your convictions will lead you
- e. **BUT DON'T JUDGE OTHER CHRISTIANS WHO DON'T JOIN YOU...** make your case to them winsomely, then let the Lord lead them
- f. Christians must see the weightiness and complexity of these issues we have surveyed and refrain from harsh judgments of those who take a different course of action

- 2. Our citizenship is in heaven

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ

- a. Be more Christian than American
- b. Be more loyal to Christ than to America
- c. Let your patriotism be first and foremost for Christ
- d. Beware of pro-American arrogance

F. Points of Action

- Be informed and think through the issues.
- Speak out for what is true and just.
- Vote whenever you have the opportunity.
- Write to or speak with government officials.
- Volunteer your time for good causes.
- Give money to support the causes of justice.
- Seek political office if you so desire.
- Live a godly life.
- Tell others about Jesus Christ.
- Respect and obey the government.
- Pray for political leaders.

G. Yearn for Christ's government

Isaiah 9:6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.