

Summary

- Jesus has the ultimate authority
 - Our calling is to make disciples of all nations
- The role of earthly authorities is to commend the right and punish the wrongdoer
- As exiles we are called to:
 - Be involved
 - Be prayerful
 - Be careful
 - Be hopeful

Resources

Organisations:

- The Christian Institute: <https://www.christian.org.uk/>
- Christian Concern: <http://www.christianconcern.com/>

Books:

- “Amazing Grace in the life of William Wilberforce” – John Piper
- “Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy” – Eric Metaxas
- “God and Politics: Jesus’ vision for society, state, and government” – Mark Dever
- “Political Church” – Jonathan Leeman

Engaging with Politics

What opportunities do we have to engage with politics in our country today?

What do you see as being the purpose and role of human government? How does politics fit into this?

Jesus Christ is Lord

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

- Jesus has already provided the solution to humanity’s problem
- Jesus has power over all Earthly authorities
 - Our ultimate allegiance is to him and his kingdom
 - Christianity is super-political: it is above and beyond any earthly ideology, party, or political position
- Our call is to act as ambassadors for the Kingdom of God, looking to bring people to acknowledge Jesus’ authority
 - This involves daily taking every opportunity to uphold righteousness
 - At times this means voting for righteousness

What does the authority of Jesus mean for our engagement with politics in this world?

How does Jesus call to ‘make disciples’ shape how we engage with politics?

The Biblical Role of Government

What does the following passage tell us about the role of government?

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 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 you will be commended. For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing.

Romans 13:1-6

- Earthly authorities are under God's control
 - Governments are legitimate because God has set them up
 - Governments are established with a particular purpose: to commend the right and punish the wrongdoer
- It is the duty of every Christian to be a good citizen
- There may be circumstances where the Christian cannot obey their earthly governments (Acts 4:19, 5:29)

How do these principles shape what we look for in our government, and our involvement with that as part of the democratic process?

How do we hold a government accountable to its God-given role?

The Biblical Role of Kingdom Ambassadors

Jeremiah 29:1-13

Context:

- Written to the second round of exiles in Babylon
- Some had been suggesting the exile would only be a few years – that was not true!
- The New Testament uses the Language of exiles about Christians (1 Peter 1:1-2, 1:17, 2:11)

A call for the exiles:

1. Be involved in your culture (v1-6)
2. Be prayerful, seeking the best for your country (v7)
3. Be careful who you listen to (v8-9)
4. Be hopeful in God's sovereignty (v10-13)

What does it look like for us to be involved in our culture?

What can we be praying for our leaders?

What implications does God's good promise to bring us back to him have for our engagement in politics?

