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## Should Christians Be Politically Motivated?

**Hebrews 13:14:** (NASB) *For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.*

Politics! For some of us the very word elicits a shiver and a feeling of frustration and disappointment. Are we really so power hungry and immature that we need to demonize those who disagree, that we need to exaggerate our own point of view and win at the cost of our own integrity? The more we know about the political game, the more it seems to be about agenda instead of the will of the people. Should Christians be involved in this arena? Does the political world need a Christian perspective? Do Christians need politics?

### What is the call of the Christian?

We have the freedom to evangelize here in the United States. Does that mean Christians should be involved in politics?

Jesus praying the night before his crucifixion, essentially praying for those all through the Gospel Age, including you and me: **John 17:14-17:** He did not ask for us to be taken out of the world but that instead we would be sanctified or set apart for a holy purpose. Our call is to not belong to this world. What does that mean when it comes to politics?

))) **"CON," John MacArthur, *The Christian and Politics***

- *As a Christian, how involved should we be in politics of the day? Is there a biblical mandate to have a voice in our country's government? I think if you are a preacher of Jesus Christ and you're a pastor than you should be known for speaking the gospel of Jesus Christ and nothing else. It has no bearing on the kingdom of God who is the President of the United States. There is no impact on the kingdom of God from the politics of this country or any other country because Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world."*

There are different "levels" of politics, such as attending your local town hall meeting, voting in different elections, pushing political agendas and running for political office. What is the Christian's responsibility to be involved or conversely to not be involved? Wouldn't we want to push Christian principles to the forefront?

**Galatians 2:19-20:** Our call is to have Christ live *in* us, in place of our own will.

**1 John 2:15-17:** Our call is to be truly unattached to this world. How can we live in the world yet be completely detached from the world? Jesus lived in the world but it did not guide him. Does political involvement fit into the guidance system we get from God and Jesus?

**Ephesians 2:1-3:** Our call is to live apart from the ruler of this world, Satan.

**1 Timothy 5:8:** Our call is to take care of our personal business with diligence. Is political involvement one of the responsibilities of our lives that we are supposed to take care of?

**1 Thessalonians 4:9-12**

### To what government was Jesus dedicated?

))) **Jesus was involved in politics, *Should Christians Be Involved*, Frank Turek, [theoakinitiative.org](http://theoakinitiative.org)**

- *You say, "Well, Frank, you're overstating the case because Jesus was not involved in politics." Was he? Yeah, he was. Often overlooked. Who did Jesus go after the most in the New Testament? Pharisees! And who are the Pharisees? The Pharisees were the religious and the political leaders of Israel. And Jesus went after these people! In fact, if you don't think Jesus was involved in politics and you think Jesus was just kind of a soft silk guy who never went after anyone, you have not read Matthew 23.*

Jesus went after the Pharisees because they were the "guardians" of Israel, God's chosen people who were under God's Law for them as a nation. We as Christians have no laws such as this, we only have Jesus' example. Jesus dealt with them not because of their politics but instead because of their political interpretation of the Law. Jesus was not trying to change the political agenda; he was challenging them to understand what the Law meant individually for the Jews at that time. Israel was formed as a nation under God's Law.

**Matthew 4:8-10:** **Focus: Personal dedication to God Almighty!**



Mark 12:30-31 Mark 12:14-17: The people wanted to know if Jesus was one of those rebels who would go against Rome. Was he telling the people not to pay their taxes and to be belligerent against the government? NO! He was not taking a political stand. He presented himself as teaching the Gospel based on the Old Testament Law. So our personal dedication to the God Almighty does not preclude the need to follow the laws of the land. Jesus here shows respect for these laws, though they seem to be of minor concern to him. **What about Jesus' reaction to the religious establishment of the day?** Matthew 17:24-27: Even though Jesus was exempt from this particular tax as God's son, he chose to not raise a fuss and to not demand his rights. He instead complies, again showing his respect for the institutions of man. **Key Observation:** Jesus was NOT involved or interested in government!

### What is a Christian's responsibility towards citizenship?

 **"PRO," Should Christians Be Involved, Frank Turek, [theoakinitiative.org](http://theoakinitiative.org)**

- If for no other reason you ought to be involved in politics, you ought to be involved in politics to protect your ability to preach the Gospel, to worship freely, to disciple others, to make this a better world not just for Christians but for all people. You have to be involved in politics if you want to be a good citizen; not only a good citizen of the United States but also a good citizen of God's kingdom, so get involved! Get off your fannies and get involved. It is important!*

**Here is a reality check for our Christian thinking:** Philippians 3:17-20: Our citizenship is in heaven. But what does that mean? Let's look further...**Priority: Know your place! Know where you belong!**

2 Corinthians 5:17-20: This is the paradigm shift of Christianity. Your life is now run by a completely new set of rules. The purpose of this shift is reconciliation. We have been reconciled to God through Christ, but our purpose is to be part of the future reconciliation of the world to God through Christ. So, we carry with us the hope of worldwide reconciliation! Do we do this through political involvement?

<sup>20</sup>*Therefore, we are **ambassadors <4243>** for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **Priority: Know whom you represent and know your mission!***

**Ambassador:** Strong's #4243 presbeuw presbeuo pres-byoo'-o; to be a senior, i.e. (by implication) act as a representative (figuratively, preacher):—be an ambassador.

An ambassador is from a different country - what country? The government we represent is God's government. We are to be citizens of heaven! Ephesians 6:18-20

**Priority: Always be about the work of your mission!**

 **Vote righteousness, John MacArthur, *The Christian and Politics***

- For a pastor to do that, I think it is to prostitute himself away from what his calling is and the only thing that makes a difference, and that's the preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and the advance of the kingdom. Having said that, let me say this: as a Christian I must take every possible approach to uphold righteousness in society so when something comes up in the courts or on the ballot that gives me an opportunity to vote for righteousness, to vote for things that I know honor God, to vote for things that protect people from evil, and all of that, I as a Christian, I have to vote what I think fits the biblical standard.*

MacArthur's previous statement on Christians not being involved was more to do with holding actual office. Here he is saying that a Christian should express his or her opinion through the ballot box. But don't go further than that because then you begin to represent things that are not of Christ.

So far we have discussed three schools of thought:

1. Not only should you be involved in politics, but you should run for office.
2. You should not run for office as a politician, but you should be expressing your opinion on a regular basis as a representative of Christ.
3. All of that is off limits because we are ambassadors. As an ambassador, one doesn't vote in the country one is visiting.

A lot of Christians fall within one of these three categories.



**The Christian perspective on governments:** Romans 13:1-2: (NASB) *1Every 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. 2Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance <5021> of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.* This seems to be saying the governments are established by God.

**Ordinance:** Strongs #5021 tassw tasso tas'-so; to arrange in an orderly manner, i.e. assign or dispose (to a certain position or lot): – addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set.

### What is a Christian's responsibility towards governmental participation?

2 Corinthians 4:3-5: Our whole life is about being a bondservant for Jesus' sake. We are to be single-minded as a true Christian. **Responsibility: Serve only one master!**

Matthew 5:14-16: We are to have a positive revealing influence as light reveals.

**Responsibility: Be an influencer of the system - not an influencer in the system!**

Does the light of the Gospel have a more powerful effect as a part of a corrupt system or apart from a corrupt system? Refer to the CQ program from July 7, 2014 for more on this topic!

1 Peter 2:11-12: The end result of our being salt and light will be later, not now. That is when the glory of God will really shine. It is a little like Jesus' healings - they didn't solve anyone's problems. All of those people ended up dying anyway. But he was showing a much bigger picture that would come later. **Responsibility: Be a stranger in this world - live with excellence - LATER they will see it!**

1 Peter 2:13-17: **Responsibility: Be a good citizen!** Whatever freedoms you have, use as a bondservant of God. It comes down to God's perspective for you specifically in the world in which you live and in your environment. **Responsibility: Be a humble citizen with your highest allegiance to God!**

1 Timothy 2:1-3: This is really the only place the Bible discusses our personal involvement in the political arena. What does it say? Keep all men in our prayers. Pray so we may be able to go about the business of the Gospel. The Scripture does not tell us to replace them in office. **Responsibility: Keep all men in our prayers, so we may be able to go about the business of the Gospel!**

When you think of prophecy and governments, what prophecy comes to mind? **This will help us understand what it means that God "set governments in order:"** Daniel 2:36-44: (NRSV) *36...now we will tell the king (Nebuchadnezzar) its interpretation. 37You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, 38into whose hand he has given... and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. 39After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. 40And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything, it shall crush and shatter all these... 43As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.*

**Now the interpretation goes from merely human events to godly events:** *44And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; This is a prophecy of governments before they existed!*

Perhaps this is the meaning of God arranging governments in "an orderly manner" in Romans 13:2. The prophecy explained this is how world power would go from generation to generation, culminating in the Fifth Universal Empire, God's kingdom. Jesus taught us to pray for that kingdom of God. The fifth empire does not grow out of the previous empires; rather it destroys the other ones - crushing them to powder for the wind to blow away.

Based on the understanding of God setting things in an orderly fashion, should we really be dedicating ourselves to making these governments work which are destined for destruction by God's own kingdom? We are putting questions on the table but believe each of us must study the Scriptures and do what our deepest spiritual conviction dictates we do.



Romans 13:5-7: This focuses on the idea of citizenship and making sure we are not being a troublemaker in the context of governmental affairs. Do what is right. Do your part so you can live a quiet and tranquil life.

Should we change politics to create more freedom, or should we abide by the politics and preach the Gospel anyway? When the governments of this world are against us, should we be quiet?

John 12:31-32: Could this prophecy apply now? No, Jesus himself said his second presence would be necessary. **Another confirmation of the origin and purpose of the kingdom of Jesus:** John 18:33-38: Notice how Jesus does not associate himself with his own nation...he was there for a higher purpose. He explained if he were here to change things right then, his followers would be fighting because that is what he would have instructed them to do. Instead he said he was not of this world and there for a higher purpose.

We are not here to tell you what to do. We want to talk about the subject and put the Scriptures together. Each will have to determine their highest spiritual, scripturally-based thinking. That is what we each should follow.

**If you believe in participation in government, what should be your objective?**

**Our involvement with the world should be as described in these six levels:** 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup>Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup>Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? **Your life is about Christ. Don't compromise that under any circumstance.** For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. <sup>17</sup>Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. <sup>18</sup>And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.

We are *supposed* to be apart from the people of this world and live separate lives.

Ephesians 2:19-22: Again, our lives are opposite from the people around us. We are a spiritual building!

What about voting? What if you had the opportunity to vote for religious freedom? Christians see this very differently. We do know that God overrules things so we should be about the business of our Father. Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven. We know this system has to come to an end. Do we want to stand in the way? This is a difficult question with many opinions. Live your highest spiritual conscience!

**Remember when Jesus said this?** Matthew 5:14-16: (NKJV) <sup>14</sup>You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup>Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

This references Abraham, living as an alien, looking for a city whose architect and builder was God. He was looking for something not of this world.

Hebrews 11:9-16: The faithful prophets of old are described in Hebrews 11. Those heroes of faith did not physically find this metaphorical city they longed for, but their lives were about something outside of this world: *they were strangers and exiles on the earth*. These Old Testament individuals (sometimes referred to as "Ancient Worthies") had a higher focus. This was before Christianity, but the principle taught here lines us up what we should be looking for - that same city from above, the "New Jerusalem" in Revelation that comes down from heaven. We should focus on the Gospel message.

**So, should Christians be politically motivated?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!**