



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?

 **“PRO,” *Should Christians Be Involved, Frank Turek, theoakinitiative.org***

- *Have you ever heard Christians say, “We ought not be involved in politics; we just ought be involved in evangelism?” Hi, I’m Frank Turek, co-author of “I Don’t Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist” and author of “Correct/Not Politically Correct.” If you’ve thought that or maybe you’ve heard somebody say that or maybe you’ve said it yourself that we ought not be involved in politics we just ought to be involved in evangelism - I want you to rethink it. Here’s why: of course evangelism is important, but if you think evangelism, worship, and discipleship are important then you have to think politics are important. Why? Because politics affects evangelism, worship, and discipleship. If you don’t think so, go to some of the countries I’ve been to. I’ve been to Iran, I’ve been to Saudi Arabia, and I’ve been to China. You can’t do what churches do in the United States of America in those countries. Why? Because politically they’ve ruled it out.*

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: (NRSV) ¹⁴*I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.* ¹⁵*I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.* ¹⁶*They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.* ¹⁷*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*

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: (NRSV) ¹⁹*For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; ²⁰and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Our call is to have Christ live *in us*, in place of our own will.

1 John 2:15-17: (NRSV) ¹⁵*Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; ¹⁶for all that is in the world--the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches - comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.*

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: (NRSV) ¹*You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else.*

Our call is to live apart from the ruler of this world, Satan.

1 Timothy 5:8: (NASB) *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

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: (NASB) ⁹*Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ¹⁰for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, ¹¹and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, ¹²so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.*



To what government was Jesus dedicated?

(Source: L. Michael White, Professor of Classics and Director of the Religious Studies Program, University of Texas at Austin) For the ordinary people of the Jewish homeland, Rome was a kind of dominant political factor. Although they might not have seen Romans on a day-to-day basis, the imposition of Roman power was certainly there. In the case of the client kingdom, Judea, Herod's rule and Herod's forces would have been the political entity. But everyone knew that Rome was the power behind the throne. Everyone knew that Rome was the source of both the wealth and also the source of some of the problems that occurred in the Jewish state. So the political reality of the day was of a dominant power overseeing life on a day-to-day basis.

 Jesus was involved in politics, *Should Christians Be Involved*, Frank Turek, 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.*



A caller from Indiana suggests: The engagement of the things in this world should be the byproduct of standing firm as a Christian. Those things should come to you rather than you going to them.

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: (NRSV) ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; ⁹and he said to him, all these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me. ¹⁰Jesus said to him, away with you, Satan! For it is written, worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.



Focus: Personal dedication to God Almighty!

Mark 12:30-31: (NRSV) ³⁰You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. ³¹The second is this; you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.

Mark 12:14-17: (NRSV) ¹⁴And they came and said to him, Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? ¹⁵Should we pay them, or should we not? But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it. ¹⁶And they brought one. Then he said to them, whose head is this, and whose title? They answered, the emperor's. ¹⁷Jesus said to them, give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's. And they were utterly amazed at him.

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: (NIV) ²⁴After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax? ²⁵Yes, he does, he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. What do you think, Simon? he asked. From who do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes--from their own sons or from others? ²⁶From others, Peter answered. Then the sons are exempt, Jesus said to him. ²⁷But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours.



Today around the Sea of Galilee, there is a thriving restaurant business serving "St. Peter's Fish," tilapia caught in the Galilee waters said to be the same kind Jesus referenced in Matthew 17. Tourists like to take pictures with a coin in the fish's mouth!

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**

- *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: (NASB) ¹⁷Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. ¹⁸For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, ¹⁹whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, **who set their minds on earthly things.** ²⁰For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.



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: (NASB) ¹⁷Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

This is the paradigm shift of Christianity. Your life is now run by a completely new set of rules.

The next part of the verse explains the purpose of that shift:

¹⁸Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

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?

²⁰Therefore, 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: Strongs #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: (NASB) ¹⁸With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, ¹⁹and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an **ambassador <4243>** in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.



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.

God arranges these things in an orderly manner. But what does this mean? Is God behind the governments or merely arranging them?

More on the use of this word in the CQ Rewind Bonus Material!

What is a Christian's responsibility towards governmental participation?

🔊) "CON," Known by the Gospel, *John MacArthur, The Christian and Politics*

- *But I understand that's a civic duty and that's separate from my responsibility to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The church needs to stay out of politicking. It needs to vote righteousness, and it needs to proclaim the Gospel. Yeah, I might have certain preferences about who's president or who's in congress and who's a judge and all of those things, and at the end of the day, however, nobody's eternity is changed by anything but the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that's what every Christian should be known for as being passionate about.*

It really is all about the Gospel!

2 Corinthians 4:3-5: (NASB) ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

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: (NKJV) ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor 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. ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

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?



A caller from Kentucky suggests that our country is the ultimate experiment in what Christians can do when they get involved in politics. The tenants of our government were founded on the word of God and that is the way the founding fathers wanted it to be. Because of their legacy to us, we should protect this very precious thing we have been given - our rights are gifts from God.

Refer to the CQ program from July 7, 2014 for more on this topic!



God created governments, crossexamined.org

- ...Let me give you some reasons why we ought to be involved in politics. Perhaps the first reason, of course, is the fact that God created governments, and He created governments, as we said, to protect the innocent, and we're called to be "salt" and "light" in everything we do. We're called to be "salt" and "light" in government. We're called to be "salt" and "light" in business. We're called to be "salt" and "light" in education. We're called to be "salt" and "light" in everything we engage ourselves in.

This is true - we have incredible responsibility...but how are we supposed to express that responsibility?

1 Peter 2:11-12: (NASB) ¹¹Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. ¹²Keep your behavior excellent (be salt and light) among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

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: (NASB) ¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

Responsibility: Be a good citizen!

¹⁵For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. ¹⁶Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. ¹⁷Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

Whatever freedoms you have, use as a bonds slave 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: (NASB) ¹First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ²for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

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!

Are there any prophecies that help to put this all in perspective?

Matthew 6:9-10: (NASB) ⁹Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

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: (NASB) ⁵Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. ⁷Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

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.

 **Politics affects evangelism, crossexamined.org**

- *If you don't think that politics is important, never forget this: politics affects evangelism. It does! If you don't think so, go to some of the countries I've been to! I've been to Iran, I've been to Saudi Arabia, I've been to China. You can't do what we are doing in this room right now in those countries. You can't evangelize in those countries - not legally anyway. What goes on in our government affects all areas of our lives, including our religious lives. That's one reason we need to be involved in politics.*

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: (NRSV) ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

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: (NASB) ³³Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to him, are you the King of the Jews? ³⁴Jesus answered, are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about me? ³⁵Pilate answered, I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered you to me; what have you done? ³⁶Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, my kingdom is not of this realm.

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.

³⁷Therefore Pilate said to him, So you are a king? Jesus answered; you say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice. ³⁸Pilate said to him, what is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, I find no guilt in him.

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?

 Involved the right way, *Eric Metaxas, Manhattan Declaration*

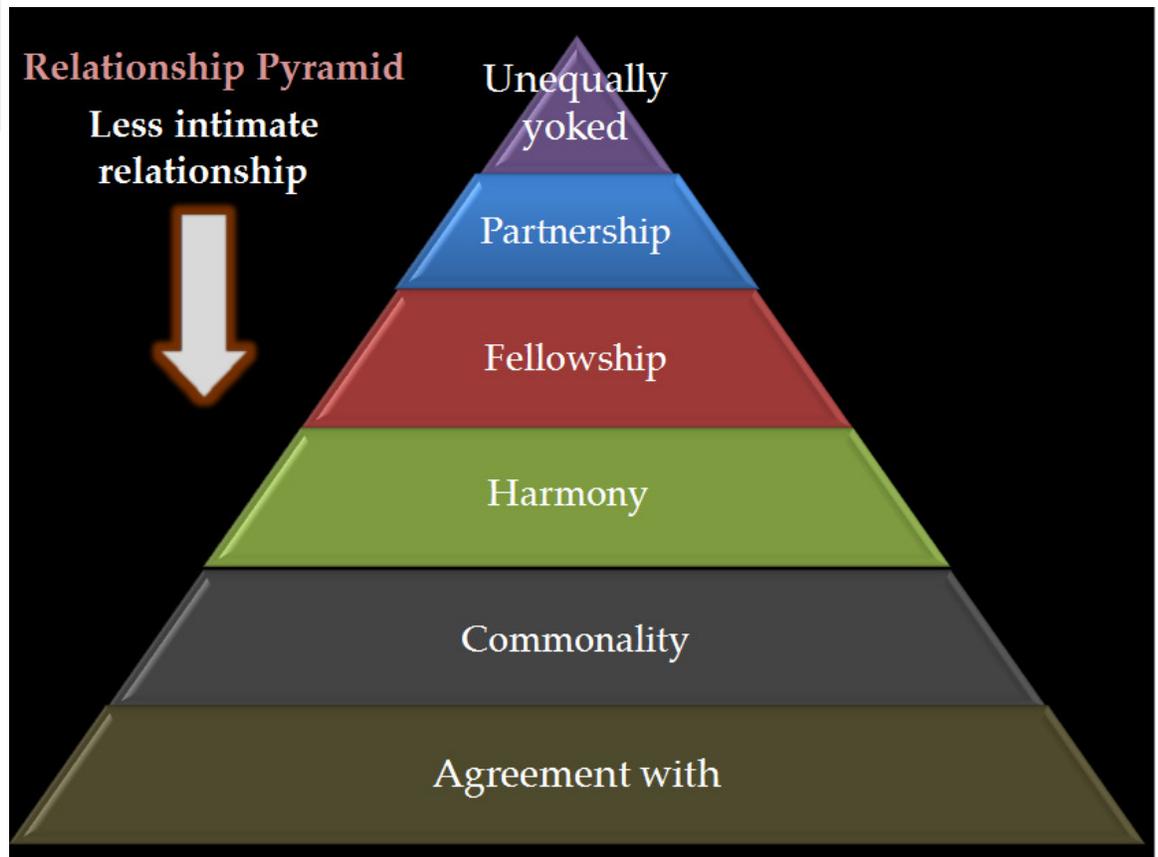
- So, God calls us to fight. If there are people being threatened who cannot speak for themselves - if there are Jews being threatened - I as a Christian have no choice but to get political and defend them. I've got to do it God's way. For Christians today to think that somehow they can avoid politics, it's an absurdity. The question is can you avoid fighting the wrong way? And the answer to that is, of course you can! And then the question is can you avoid not fighting at all? I would say no. You've got to fight, but you've got to fight God's way. This is a fundamental and absolutely vitally important issue for us today to understand that we've got to be involved. The question is can we be involved the right way- the way God calls us to be involved and not the way some people in previous decades have been involved which we now know is the wrong way.*



A caller from Connecticut suggests: As Christians we cannot help but be political because we live in a city, a nation, a state. In essence, we live with other people. How do we transform being political from being manipulative to being transformative? Romans 12:2: *Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.* The Christian acts with gentle strength, infused with the attitude of Christ. We perform our civic duties, whatever they may be. We do not demonize or hate those who disagree with us. We do not bend with the wind but we also do not try to break others. Human government will never be perfect but the Christian can demonstrate peace. James 3:17: *The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality.*

Our involvement with the world should be as described in these six levels:

2 Corinthians 6:14-18: (NASB) ¹⁴*Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?* ¹⁵*Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?* ¹⁶*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. ¹⁷Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. ¹⁸And 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: (NKJV) ¹⁹Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

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) ¹⁴*You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵*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.* ¹⁶*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: (NASB) ⁹*By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;* ¹⁰*for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.* ¹¹*By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.* ¹²*Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.* ¹³*All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.* ¹⁴*For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.* ¹⁵*And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.* ¹⁶*But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.*

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...!*

*And now even more to think about...
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After all the talk about obeying laws, here is a good example of our ambassadorship:

Acts 5:12-31: (NRSV) ¹²*Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.* ¹³*None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem.* ¹⁴*Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women,* ¹⁵*so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by.* ¹⁶*A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.* ¹⁷*Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy,* ¹⁸*arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.* ¹⁹*But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out,*



and said, ²⁰go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life. ²¹When they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and went on with their teaching. When the high priest and those with him arrived, they... sent to the prison to have them brought. ²²But when the temple police went there, they did not find them in the prison; so they returned and reported, ²³we found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside. ²⁴Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering what might be going on. ²⁵Then someone arrived and announced, look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people! ²⁶Then the captain went with the temple police and brought them, but without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people. ²⁷When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, we gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us. ²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

The principle here is that we always obey God, no matter what our outward circumstances may be.

A bit more on the Romans 13:1 verse - God "ordained" governments:

Romans 13:1: 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 <5021>** by God.

Ordained: 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.

All uses of this word:

Matthew 28:16: (KJV) Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had **appointed <5021>** them.

Luke 7:8: (KJV) For I also am a man **set <5021>** under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh; and to my servant, do this, and he doeth it.

Acts 13:48: (KJV) And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were **ordained <5021>** to eternal life believed.

Acts 15:2: (KJV) When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they **determined <5021>** that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

Acts 22:10: (KJV) And I said, what shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are **appointed <5021>** for thee to do.

Acts 28:23: (KJV) And when they had **appointed <5021>** him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

Romans 13:1: (KJV) Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are **ordained <5021>** of God.

1 Corinthians 16:15: (KJV) I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have **addicted <5021>** themselves to the ministry of the saints.



A bit more on the Roman culture of Jesus' time:

(Source: L. Michael White, Professor of Classics and Director of the Religious Studies Program University of Texas at Austin) THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND JUDEA

The way the Roman Empire developed was gradually to take over more and more territories in the eastern Mediterranean. Some of these were governed as provinces. You can imagine the Roman Empire gradually taking over more and more areas as they conquered and progressively moved to the east: North Africa, Egypt, Asia Minor, modern day Turkey, Syria. And gradually, they also conquered Judea. In the process, they set up some as provinces, and some as client kingdoms. Judea happened to be one of these client kingdoms run by its own independent, or semi-independent, King. This is the person we know as Herod the Great.

For the ordinary people of the Jewish homeland, Rome was a kind of dominant political factor. Although they might not have seen Romans on a day-to-day basis, the imposition of Roman power was certainly there. In the case of the client kingdom, Judea, Herod's rule and Herod's forces would have been the political entity. But everyone knew that Rome was the power behind the throne. Everyone knew that Rome was the source of both the wealth and also the source of some of the problems that occurred in the Jewish state. So the political reality of the day was of a dominant power overseeing the life on a day-to-day basis.