

POLITICS

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(Summarized by Paul Schlehle)

I. Five Wrong Views About Christians and Government

A. GOVERNMENT SHOULD COMPEL RELIGION

1. This was held by Christians of past centuries (e.g. 30 Years War between Catholics and Protestants and the murder of thousands of Anabaptists by Reformed and Lutheran brethren because of their insistence on believer's baptism).
2. Other religions support this, like Islam and Hinduism (this is how they justify the persecution of Christians).
3. The US was founded in order to support freedom of religion (e.g. the Pilgrims left England because they faced imprisonment and fines for failure to attend the Church of England).
4. The Virginian Acts for Establishing Religious Freedom (1779 by Thomas Jefferson) said that no one is to be compelled to worship in a certain kind of religion.
5. Reasons we should not compel religion:
 - a. Jesus distinguished the realms of God and of Caesar (Matthew 22)
 - i. Jesus showed that there are to be two different spheres of influence (government and religious life). The church should not try to control the things of the civil government and vice versa.
 - ii. The laws for Israel in the OT were different than today. It was a theocracy where God gave laws directly to Israel (not decided by a king). Everyone was "God's people", and were expected to follow secular commands and religious.
 - iii. Jesus showed a new order of how things work as different from the OT (Matt. 22:21).
 - b. Jesus refused to try to compel people to believe in him (Luke 9:52-55)
 - c. Genuine faith cannot be forced
 - i. True faith in Christ must be voluntary.
 - ii. But what about the OT laws that demanded tithe monies, specific sacrifices (Lev. 23) and even punishment for those who followed other religions (Deut. 13:6-11)? These laws were only for the nation of Israel for a particular time. They were not given to other nations.
 - d. Not a worldly kingdom (John 18:36)
 - i. Jesus didn't fight with his disciples because He wasn't trying to establish an earthly kingdom like the Roman Empire.
 - ii. Jesus wanted to change hearts.
6. Practical implications of rejecting the "compel religion" view
 - a. We should never force people to believe but guarantee religious freedom.

- b. Complete freedom of religion should be the first principle advocated and defended by Christians.
- c. Government should not give direct financial support to one church as the "state church" (this is what the First Amendment prohibits). Taxes to state churches is common in many European countries.
- 7. What about tax benefits to churches? This is ok because it doesn't "compel religion"; all churches get same perks.
- 8. The Spiritual influence behind the "compel religion" view
 - a. This destroys the Christian faith in two ways:
 - i. If people are compelled to follow non-Christian religions leaders, then Christians will be driven out.
 - ii. If people are compelled to follow Christian religious leaders, it drives out true Christianity; people will be Christian in name only.

B. GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXCLUDE RELIGION

- 1. That is, religion should never be mentioned in government. This is the position of the ACLU; religion should be kept at home.
- 2. Examples: objection to public prayers, demand for the 10 Commandments to be removed, and prohibition of prayers, Scripture reading etc. at school events. Also, removing crosses from state seals and voting on decisions based on religious beliefs.
- 3. Reasons this is wrong:
 - a. It fails to distinguish the reasons for a law from the content of the law
 - i. Most of our laws (like stealing, murder and slavery) have religious reasons behind them, though they do not "establish" a religion.
 - ii. This will lead to invalidating any decision a Christian makes.
 - b. It overrides the will of the people
 - c. It changes freedom *of* religion into freedom *from* religion
 - i. The first two sentences of the Declaration of Independence mention God twice. The signers of the Declaration claimed divine authorization for the very existence of the USA!
 - ii. Thus, using religious reasons to support a secular law is not establishing a religion. This is not what the 1st Amendment meant. The point was for the government to keep their hands out of the affairs of the church, not the church to keep their hands out of the affairs of the government.
 - d. It wrongly restricts freedom of religion and freedom of speech
 - i. Speaking a religious opinion in public is not compelling people to accept that viewpoint.
 - ii. People should be free to base their decisions on Scripture, Confucius, Buddha, Dr. Phil or whoever. It's not the job of the Supreme Court to decide whose votes are legit and whose are not.
 - e. It was never adopted by the American people
 - f. It removes from government God's teaching about good and evil (Rom. 13:4, 1 Pt. 2:14).

- g. Biblical examples of God's people giving counsel to rulers
 - i. Daniel → King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:27)
 - ii. John the Baptist → Herod the Tetrarch (Luke 3:19)
 - iii. Paul → Felix (Acts 24:25)
- h. The spiritual basis for the "exclude religion" view
 - i. This view removes absolute moral standards.
 - ii. This view wants to make society completely secular.

C. ALL GOVERNMENT IS EVIL AND DEMONIC

- Government is the realm of Satan. Most who hold this view are pacifists. We are to turn the other cheek (Mat. 5:39).
- 1. Support from Luke 4:6
 - a. Viewpoint of Minnesota pastor Greg Boyd in *The Myth of a Christian Nation*.
- 2. The problem with using Luke 4:6
 - a. Satan is a liar; we are not to believe his is complete ruler of this world.
 - b. Scriptures to the contrary (Dn. 4:17, Rom. 13:1-6, 1 Peter 2:13-14).
- 3. But where did Jesus ever teach us to use force?
 - a. We must go to the whole of Scripture, not just the teachings of Jesus.
- 4. Boyd says Christians should not even fight to defend their wives and children or their country.
- 5. God has established both evangelism and the power of government to restrain evil
 - a. We must not confuse these two. We are to spread the Gospel by preaching, not by the sword. But God *has* told us to restrain evil by the power of the sword and by the power of civil government (Rom. 13:1-6).
 - b. If the power of government isn't present, we should do everything possible (e.g. physical force) to protect a victim or family member who is in danger of harm. We shouldn't persuade him to trust in Christ as Savior!
 - c. Nehemiah implored Israel to fight for their families (Neh. 4:14); Abraham fought for his nephew Lot (Gen. 14).
 - d. So, evangelism is *one* of the ways to restrain evil, but not the only way.
- 6. The more ominous implications of the "all government is demonic" view
 - a. It tends to persuade Christians to oppose all governmental power over evil (contra Gen. 9:5-6, Rom. 13:1-6, 1 Peter 2:13-14).
 - b. It brings less and less support for a strong military.
 - c. At the heart of this position is an exact reversal of the role of God and Satan with regard to civil government.

D. DO EVANGELISM, NOT POLITICS

- 1. Def. – the church is called to "preach the Gospel", not to preach about politics.
- 2. Examples:
 - a. John MacArthur: "God does not call the church to influence the culture by promoting legislation and court rulings that advance a scriptural point of view."

b. John MacArthur: "the ideal human government can ultimately do nothing to advance God's kingdom, and the worst, most despotic worldly government in the end cannot halt the power of the Holy Spirit or the spread of God's Word."

i. But: think of how North Korea has "halted" the gospel.

ii. But: think of how South Korea has furthered the gospel.

3. Reasons this is incorrect

a. Too narrow an understanding of "the Gospel" and the kingdom of God

i. The Gospel isn't just the Romans Road; it's the good news about every area of life (Matt. 28:19-20).

ii. "teaching them to observe all things" is speaking of all of Scripture, including those portions that speak of government.

iii. Jesus was not only concerned with the spiritual (forgiving sins) but also the physical (healing diseases).

b. The "whole Gospel" includes a transformation of society.

i. Forgiveness of sins is good, but not the only benefit of the Gospel. Jesus also wants to transform lives and thus changed schools, businesses, societies, and governments.

ii. Churches should teach God's will about schools, businesses, families, children, AND governments.

c. Which parts of the Bible should the church not preach about?

d. God leaves Christians here on earth both to do evangelism and to do good to others (Matt. 22:39)

i. This also means that we should seek good laws to carry out Matt. 22:39. We should carry out the ramifications of this verse in every area of society.

ii. Shouldn't people do these good these "good works" (Eph. 2:10) in government as well as schools, hospitals, churches and societies?

e. God established both the church and the government to restrain evil

i. The only way to restrain evil is *not* only changing hearts.

ii. Example: we make laws against drunk driving. The Gospel often doesn't change him, so we make laws to stop him (Rom. 13:1,3)

iii. Example: when was slavery stopped in the US? Not when the Gospel had reached the South, but when the US government made laws forbidding it.

f. Christians have influenced governments positively throughout history

i. Alvin Schmidt in *How Christianity Changed the World* shows how Christianity influenced government to forbid:

- Infanticide
- Child abandonment
- The gladiator games
- Branding the faces of criminals
- Human sacrifice
- Burning widows
- Polygamy

- Foot binding in the Orient
- ii. Example: Wilberforce helped abolish slavery
- iii. Example: significant documents (e.g. Magna Carta, Constitution etc.) were led by Christians.
- g. Doesn't the Bible say that persecution is coming?
 - i. We don't know when Christ is returning. Our responsibility is to do good works and love our neighbors as ourselves (Matt. 22:39).
 - ii. If we just give up after persecution comes, then none of the tremendous reforms in government in times past would have happened.
- h. But won't political involvement distract us from the main task of preaching the Gospel?
 - i. God calls different people to different things. Giving all our time to teaching children, or singing in the choir or doing church sound does not distract from the Gospel.
 - ii. In a healthy church, some people will emphasize politics, while others business, education, media, counseling etc.

E. DO POLITICS, NOT EVANGELISM

1. This is the primary emphasis of the Social Gospel groups that emphasize overcoming poverty, slums, crime and other social evils.
 2. No prominent evangelicals hold this position.
 3. We must not be deluded into thinking that politics alone will change our culture and society. People's hearts and minds must change.
- The Correct View (next chapter) is: Significant Christian influence on government. This is not compulsion (View 1), silence (view 2), dropping out of the process (view 3 & 4) or thinking the government will save people (view 5).

II. A Better Solution: Significant Christian Influence on Government

- Definition – **Christians should seek to influence civil government according to God's moral standards and God's purposes for government as revealed in the Bible.**

- "Significant Influence" does not mean mean, angry, judgmental or intolerant but winsome, kind, thoughtful and loving.

A. Understanding the Bible Rightly

1. To the charge that no one can understand perfectly what the Bible says, it must be acknowledged that there are far more things that responsible interpreters of Scripture *agree* about than disagree.
2. Nearly all of these agree that murder, theft, adultery is sin.
3. However, there are significant disagreements over: death penalty, just war etc. As time goes on, the best arguments usually garner the greatest following.
4. Purpose: I am attempting to persuade others who believe the Bible that the points I am making can in fact be substantiated from a responsible use of the Bible.

B. Liberal Distortions of the Bible

1. Liberal theologians do not know how to interpret Scripture accurately.
2. Thesis of Book: To the extent that Scripture is followed, is the extent the nations will be benefited.

C. Biblical Support for Significant Christian Influence

1. OT Examples
 - a. Daniel influenced Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:27ff)
 - b. Jeremiah's words to Jewish exiles in Babylon (Jer. 29:7)
 - c. Joseph influenced Pharaoh (Gen. 41-45)
 - d. Nehemiah was cupbearer to the king (Neh. 1:11)
 - e. Mordecai and Esther influenced King Ahasuerus (Esther)
2. NT Examples
 - a. John the Baptist → Herod Antipas (Matt. 14:3-4)
 - b. Paul → Felix (Acts 24:24-25)
3. Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2
 - a. The fact that there are specific passages given to government is an argument for "significant Christian influence" on government.
4. The Responsibility of citizens in a democracy to understand the Bible's teaching
 - a. In a democracy, a significant portion of the ruling power of government is entrusted to the citizens through the ballot box. Voting is sharing in ruling power.
 - b. Therefore, all citizens who are old enough to vote have a responsibility before God to know what God expects morally and civilly of civil government. How can we learn this? Through the preaching of God's Word.
 - c. To what degree is debated. But certainly we are to teach on *some* of these issues. Our responsibility as pastors is not to teach our people ambiguous claims like:
 - i. You must bring up your children according to Christian principles.
 - ii. You must work in the business world according to Christian principles.

- d. Thus, our responsibility is to *apply* the Scriptures, taking general commands to specifics situations in life.

D. Historical Examples of Christian Influence on Secular Governments

1. Concession: of course, Christians have made mistakes in government in the past.
2. However: Christians have done incredible good through government (v. Schmidt above)
3. Objection: "You can't legislate morality" (e.g. the disaster of Prohibition)
 - a. Summary: in 1919, the US passed the 18th Amendment forbidding the manufacture, sale and transport of intoxicating liquors. It was impossible to enforce effectively and failed. In 1933, this amendment was repealed.
 - b. Lesson: it is impossible to enforce moral standards on a population when those moral standards are more strict than the standard found in the Bible itself.¹

E. Is the US a Christian Nation?

1. A simple "yes" or "no" is impossible to give until we define "Christian nation".
2. Possible questions and answers:
 - a. Is Christian teaching the primary religious system that influenced the founding of the US? Yes.
 - b. Were the majority of the Founding Fathers of the US Christians who generally believed in the truth of Scripture? Yes.
 - c. Is Christianity (of various sorts) the largest religion in the US? Yes.
 - d. Did Christian beliefs provide the intellectual background that led to many of the cultural values still held by Americans today? Yes.
 - e. Was there a Supreme Court decision at one time that affirmed that the US is a Christian nation? Yes
 - f. Are the majority of people in the US Bible-believing, evangelical, born-again Christians? No (probably around 20%)
 - g. Is belief in Christian values the dominant perspective promoted by the US government, the media, universities in the US today? No.
 - h. Does the US promote Christianity as the national religion? No.
 - i. Does a person have to promote Christian faith in order to become a citizen? No.

F. What About the Old Testament Law? (The Question of **Theonomy**)

1. Definition of Theonomy (or Christian Reconstructionism or Dominion Theology): the OT laws that God gave to Israel in the Mosaic covenant should be the pattern for civil laws in the nations today.
2. This would include: death penalty for blasphemy, adultery, and homosexuality.
3. Error: misunderstand the unique place that these laws for Israel had in the history of the whole Bible, and they misunderstand the NT teaching of the distinction between the realm of the church and the realm of the state that Jesus established (Matt. 22:21).
4. Adherents: Rushdoony and Bahnsen

G. Should Christians Only Vote For Christian Candidates?

1. No, vote for the one closest to the righteous elements.

¹ Grudem misses the point here. He implies a moral act can be legislated as long as it is Biblical. He chose one that was not. But what about forbidding the act of adultery in private (similar to Prohibition)? This is clearly sin in Scripture, but we could never enforce this issue either. I was disappointed with how he dealt with this.

2. God has used non-Christians to advance His cause (Pharaoh of Egypt who promoted Joseph, Nebuchadnezzar for Daniel, Ahasuerus for Esther, and Cyrus for the Jews).
 3. We are not just to pray for Christians in office but for all (1 Tim. 2:2).
- H. Without Christian Influence Governments Will Have No Clear Moral Compass
1. Think of all the moral issues that are facing our nation: war, same-sex marriage, abortion, pornography, poverty, care for the environment, capital punishment, education and moral standards.
 2. If Christians do not speak publically about moral and ethical issues facing a nation, who will?
- I. The Responsibility of Pastors To Teach on Political Issues
1. Great judgment and discernment is needed in this matter.
 2. There are topics we must speak out on (like abortion but not rate of income tax).
 3. Avoid placing excessive emphasis on politics.
- J. The Obligation of All Christian Citizens
1. The obligation to be informed and to vote
 - This is a stewardship that God entrusts to us.
 2. Is there an obligation to do more than vote?
 - a. Is it morally right to receive great benefits from a nation but to give almost nothing in return.
 - b. Hundreds of thousands of men and women have given their lives to protect our country.
- K. Churches and the IRS Guidelines
1. The IRS prohibit pastors from explicitly saying that they support or oppose any candidate by name.
 2. We can still speak carefully to prepare our people.

III. Biblical Principles Concerning Government

A. Government Should Punish Evil and Encourage Good

1. The Old Testament foundation

a. Genesis 9:5-6

- i. Here we find that murder is to be repaid by the forfeiture of the criminal's own life.
- ii. This is the most severe punishment in retribution for the most horrible crime.
- iii. If government has the right to carry out punishment for the most serious crime, it follows that it also has the right to carry it out for lesser crimes.
- iv. Remember, this command is given long before the people of Israel were created; this is at the beginning of the reestablishment of human society.

b. Anarchy is a highly destructive evil

- i. Where there is a weak government or no government at all, very destructive results follow. Classic example is Judges 18-25 where we find no king in Israel and anarchy ruled. Here we find the most horrible sins in Scripture.
- ii. If there is not government to restrain evil, evil will increase.

c. Governments should execute justice and defend the weak (Ps. 82:2-4)

d. Governments should execute swift punishment as a deterrent to crime (Ecc. 8:11).

2. Similar NT teaching

a. Romans 13:1-7

- i. God has appointed the authorities who have governmental power (vv. 1-2; cf. John 19:11).
- ii. Civil rulers should be a "terror to bad conduct" (v.3)
- iii. They should give "approval or praise to those who do what is good (v. 3)
 - Example: tax supported playgrounds
 - Example: tax free status to churches
 - Example: economic benefits to married couples
- iv. Government officials should serve God (v.4)
- v. Government officials are doing "good" as they carry out their work (v.4).
 - But not everything a ruler does is good (Luke 3:19, Dan. 4:27).
- vi. Government executes God's wrath on wrongdoers and thereby carry out a task of retribution.
 - That is, government should not only prevent wrongdoing but also punish it.
 - Romans 12:19 means we are not to take *personal vengeance*; God's wrath punishes wrongdoers through the medium of government.

b. 1 Peter 2:13-14

c. What about "turning the other cheek" as in Matthew 5:39?

- i. People often appeal to this passage to show that government should correct the *causes* for wrong doing, often blaming the society and not the doer.
- ii. Jesus is not referring to government conduct here but rather personal conduct.
- iii. If this were an absolute requirement, just three verses later would pose a big problem (Matt. 5:42).

d. There would be civil government even in a sinless world.

- i. Yes, because it also promotes the good of society.

B. What About the Detailed Laws for Israel Given in Exodus-Deuteronomy?

- 1. Understanding exactly how Israel's laws might possibly be relevant to secular civil governments today is one of the most complex questions in biblical interpretation.

Reasons:

- a. The place of Israel in history
- b. Israel was unique because it was a theocracy ruled by God Himself and therefore the laws of Israel governed the religious life of God's people as well as their civil life.
- c. Israel's laws were historically unique.
- d. Just because Israel maintained its identity as a holy nation by giving the death penalty for murder, false religion, rebellion against family, and sexual sin does not mean that today's nations should attempt the same thing.
- e. Conclusion: while the laws to Israel serve as a good model and example, they are not binding today.

- 2. What about keeping the Sabbath? Grudem's position is that the fourth commandment is different from all the rest in that it was a summary of all the ceremonial laws that God gave to Israel (including the Sabbath year, the Jubilee year, and various sacrifices).

C. God is Sovereign Over All Nations, and All People are Accountable to Him (Isa. 12-23, Jer. 45:51, Ezek. 25-32, Amos 1-2, Obadiah, Jonah and Ps. 75).

D. Governments Should Serve the People and Seek the Good of the People, Not the Rulers

- 1. Good Example: Samuel (1 Sam. 12:3-4)
- 2. Bad Example: Bad kings (1 Sam. 8:11-17)
- 3. Bad Example: Omar Bongo's abuse of power in Gabon

E. Citizens Should Be Subject to the Government and Obey the Laws of the Government (except in certain circumstances).

- 1. The general obligation to be subject to the civil government (Rom. 13:1-2, 1 Peter 2:13-14).
- 2. When is it right to disobey the civil government?
 - a. When obedience would mean direct disobedience to a command of God.
 - b. Examples:
 - i. Acts 4:18-20
 - ii. Acts 5:29
 - iii. Daniel (Daniel 3:13-17)
 - iv. Hebrew midwives (Exod. 1:17, 21)
 - v. Esther (Esther 4:16)

3. Is it ever right to attempt to overthrow the existing government or obtain freedom from an existing government?

- a. Some believe America's rebellion against Britain was rebellion against Romans 13:1-7 (e.g. John MacArthur). However, it's true that America's rebellion was probably just. King George III of England was a tyrant and they were protecting themselves (See Declaration of Independence for more info).

b. God raised up leaders to deliver his people from the rule of tyrants (e.g. Moses vs. Pharaoh). Also, see Hebrews 11:33.

F. Government should safeguard human liberty

Liberty is so important because it allows people the freedom to obey or disobey God and to serve or not serve him.

1. Biblical arguments for human liberty
 - a. Slavery is always viewed negatively in Scripture (Ex. 20:2).
 - b. Freedom to choose is viewed positively (Josh. 24:15, Matt. 11:28, Rev. 22:17).
2. Governments should protect human liberty
 - a. Examples of basic freedoms would be freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, bearing arms, and security of homes.
 - b. Totalitarian governments that control all aspects of life are contrary to Scripture's value on human liberty.
3. How much restriction of liberty is necessary?
 - a. Some restriction of liberty is good (e.g. speed limits)
 - b. But for every small loss of liberty, we come closer to the slaves of government.
 - c. The largest loss of liberty by government action is through taxation.

G. Government cannot save people or fundamentally change human hearts

1. Personal salvation is a work of God, not government (Ezek. 36:26).
2. Inwardly transformed people are necessary for a transformed society
 - a. Winning elections is not enough to change a nation.
 - b. Laws work best when they govern a people who have good moral character and moral convictions. John Adams said, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and righteous people. It is wholly inadequate for the governance of an other."
3. Governments significantly influence people's moral convictions and behavior and the moral fabric of a nation.
 - a. Sometimes governments pass laws that authorize horribly evil deeds (Haman and Esth. 3:13).
 - b. This is why we are to pray for kings (1 Tim. 2:2).
 - c. Government laws have a teaching function, which is why there are so many abortions today (also, grounds for divorce, drinking age and same-sex marriage).

H. Principles for a Right Relationship between church and state

1. The church should not govern "the things that are Caesar's"
 - a. There should be no church control on the actions of government.
 - b. Jesus refused to take any governmental role (Luke 12:13-14)
2. The civil government should not govern "the things that are God's"
 - a. Every nation, therefore, should allow freedom of religion.
 - b. Contrary to the nation of Israel, the government of the church and the government of the state are different systems of government.
3. Civil government should support and encourage churches and bona-fide religious groups in general
 - a. Examples: tax exempt status or funding military chaplains.

- b. These promote the "general welfare" of society.

4. The most difficult church/state questions arise when people disagree over whether something belongs to the realm of the church or to the realm of the state.

- a. Example: Government has forcibly imposed blood transfusions to the children of JW's because they saw this as the domain of civil government, not of the church.
 - b. Example: a new religion cropped up in the US saying growing marijuana was part of their "worship".
 - c. Example: a Muslim who insisted she receive her driver's license picture with only the thin slits of her eyes showing.
5. Governments should establish a strong and clear separation of powers
- a. Government should be divided among several different groups or person, not concentrated in only one person or group.
 - b. Scripture warns of the problems that come when kings have too much power.
 - c. Jesus established not one apostle over the church, but twelve.
 - d. Churches should be led by a plurality of elders.

I. The Rule of Law Must Apply Even to the Rulers in a Nation

- 1. Even the king of Israel had to write out the Mosaic law and be under it (Deut. 17:18-20).
- J. The Bible gives indirect but significant support to the idea that government should be chosen by the people (some kind of democracy)
- 1. People are equal because they are made in the image of God.
 - 2. Accountability of rulers to the people helps prevent a misuse of their powers.
 - a. Q: How do we know if a nation is a democracy?
 - b. A: if a person can walk in the middle of the town square and express his views without fear of arrest, imprisonment, or physical harm.
 - 3. If government is to serve the benefit of the people (Rom. 13:4), this means that the government does not exist ultimately for the good of the king but for the good of the people.
4. Government works best with the consent of those who are governed (Ex. 4:29-31, 2 Sam. 2:4, 1 Kings 1:39, Acts 6:3; in contrast, king Rehoboam did not listen to the people, 1 Kings 12:15).
- a. In 1950, there were 31 democracies (31% of the population).
 - b. By 2000, 120 of the 192 countries were democracies (58% of population).

5. Conclusion: Democracies get messy, but they are superior to the alternatives and often work quite well.

- K. Nations should value patriotism
- 1. Biblical reasons for patriotism
 - a. God has established nations on earth (Acts 17:26); one benefit is that they divide and disperse government power throughout the earth.
 - b. We are to honor the leaders of our nations (1 Peter 2:17, Eccl. 10:20)
 - 2. The benefits of patriotism in a nation
 - a. A sense of belonging to a larger community of people
 - b. Gratitude for the benefits that nation gives

- c. A shared sense of pride in the achievements of other individuals to whom one "belongs"
- d. A sense of pride for the good things that a nation has done.
- e. A sense of security with respect to the future, because of an expectation that the larger group will work for the good of the nation
- f. A sense of obligation to serve the nation and do good for it in various ways, to defend it from military attack or from unfair criticism by others, to protect the existence and character of the nation for future generations, and to improve the nation in various ways where possible.
- g. A sense of obligation to live by and to transmit to newcomers and succeeding generations a shared sense of moral values and standards.
- h. Contrast: the opposite of patriotism is scorn or hatred for a nation. We can show patriotism and still acknowledge and be grieved by the deeds that have been done by their nation.

IV. **A BIBILCAL WORLDVIEW**

Five Pillars of a Christian Worldview?

1. The one true God created everything "very good".
2. God reveals his moral standards in the Bible.
3. Because of Adam's sin, creation is under a curse and moral evil exists in every human heart.
4. God expects humans to develop the world's resources in a wise manner.
5. Trusting in the death and resurrection of Christ is the only way sinners will find forgiveness.

- A. God created everything
- B. The one true God reveals himself and his moral standards clearly in the Bible
- C. The original creation was "very good"
- D. Because Adam and Eve sinned, there is moral evil ("sin") in the heart of every human being
 1. There are moral standards external to the human race
 2. Human nature is not basically good
 3. Human are responsible for their actions
 4. In some, there is violent, irrational evil
- E. Because Adam and Eve sinned, God placed a curse on the entire natural world
- F. God wants human beings to develop the earth's resources and to use them wisely and joyfully

V. THE COURTS AND THE QUESTION OF ULTIMATE POWER IN A NATION

A. Ultimate Power: Who will have it?

1. Some say: monarchs, dictators, prime minister, president etc.
2. In the US, the highest authority is a document—the Constitution.
3. In others, the highest authority is a king, who makes up the laws.
4. The US used checks and balances to ensure that one part of the government could not take over and change the Constitution.
5. In this respect, the goal was to have one group *make the laws* and another group *interpret and apply the laws*. Therefore, the judges *interpret and apply* the Constitution but they do not *make* laws. Originally, the judges were to make no laws. The benefits are:
 - a. Separation of powers: the Congress can pass laws but it cannot judge them to see if they are constitutional. If they both wrote and judged laws, it would be like grading their own paper.
 - b. Accountability to those who make laws: those who make laws are accountable to the people (e.g. Congress and state legislatures).
 - c. Rule of law: the highest authority in the nation is not any person or group of persons. Therefore, it is very difficult to change the Constitution (one 27 amendments ever, including the first 10 in the Bill of Rights).
 - d. Protection from fundamental change
 - e. Protection from a hasty majority

B. According to the Bible, what should judges do?

1. The essential role of judges is to judge according to a law external to themselves. (Eze. 44:24, Acts 23:3, Ezra 7:25-26, 27)
2. Judges are not to show partiality or take bribes, for this would be using some other basis for judgment than the established law. (Deut. 16:18-20, Exod. 20:15, 22:1)
 - a. Taking bribes is a distortion of justice (Exod. 23:3-8; Lev. 19:15).
 - b. Others (2 Chron. 19:5-7, Ps. 82:2-4, Prov. 17:26)
3. Conclusion: judges are to evaluate cases fairly according to an established standard of law external to themselves.

C. What has actually happened in the United States?

1. The gradual discovery that the Supreme Court could have unlimited power
 - a. There was a weakness in the system. If a case came to the Supreme Court and the Constitution did not say something that the S.C. wanted it to say, they could discover "new" principles in the Constitution, and no one would have the power to overrule them.
 - b. A classic example of this was Roe v. Wade in 1973. There were laws against this in all 50 states but this decision overturned them all. Yet, the Constitution said nothing about abortion (though they went to the 14th amendment and the "right to privacy" for their proof). Once the S.C. decided this, it was the law of the land; no one could stop it.
2. The Supreme Court thus became the most powerful group in the nation

- a. They began making up new constitutional doctrines whenever they could get a majority of five person to do so, and they could always claim to “discover” new doctrines in the Constitution. In other words, the Constitution is what the judge says it is.
 - b. Since justices are appointed for life, they are accountable to no one. Thus the most important laws of the land are made by unaccountable, unelected individuals.
 - c. Supreme Court changes regarding freedom of religion
 - i. The first amendment protects freedom of religion. All this forbid was the establishment of a state church. Praying before a game is a far cry from “establishing” Judaism, Christianity, or Catholicism.
 - ii. The SC had now ruled this to mean that government shall have no *interaction* with religion of any kind (e.g. no prayer, or creation in schools).
 - d. Taking private property for private development
 - i. The major case here is *Kelo v. City of New London* in 2005.
 - e. Four votes to change laws regarding acceptance of homosexual conduct
 - i. Major case was *Boy Scouts of America et al. v. Dale* in 2000.
 - ii. The SC was within one vote of forbidding the Boy Scouts to not allow homosexuals as leaders.
 - iii. Again, had the citizens of the US or elected representatives voted on this? No. Did the Founding Fathers ever intend the SC to have this kind of power? No.
 - f. State laws regarding same-sex marriage
 - g. Laws giving special legal rights to homosexuals
 - i. Certain laws make us ask: will a Christian photographer be forced to take pictures of homosexual weddings. Will a church be forced to use its facilities for homosexual weddings. What about B & B, or radio stations or small businesses?
 - ii. A very substantial decision by the people of Colorado regarding homosexuals was overturned by the SC in *Romer v. Evans*.
 - h. Other cases, including capital punishment
 - From 1972 to 1976, the death penalty was outlawed in the US because the SC saw it as cruel and unusual punishment (8th amendment). This was clearly not the original meaning of the document, though.
 - i. What if citizens want to change these decisions?
 - We can't. We have no power to overcome these rulings. It wouldn't matter if all 50 state legislatures and Congress itself passed laws restricting abortion. The SC has spoken.
3. Liberal politicians uphold this process of judges making new laws
 - a. A major loss was when Reagan's nomination Robert Bork in 1987 was not accepted into the SC. This very well could have overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Instead, Anthony Kennedy was voted in and the course of US history was changed forever.
 - b. Bork was a strong “originalist” judge.
 4. The rise of originalism in constitutional interpretation

- D. Limiting the power of the courts by appointing "originalist" judges is the most important issue facing the nation today
1. Democrats and Republicans differ strongly over this issue
 - a. Control of the judicial system is the single most important issue for the future of the US.
 - b. One reason our country has drifted so far is because of the SC's takeover of the right to make decisions in all the important issues, like: abortion, homosexuality, religion etc.
 2. The current status of the Supreme Court
 - a. Usually liberal (Stephen Breyer, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sonia Sotomayor, John Paul Stevens)
 - b. Swing vote (Anthony Kennedy)
 - c. Originalist (Samuel Alito, John Roberts, Antonio Scalia, Clarence Thomas)
 3. This is why the election for President every four years is so important. If we get originalist justices, the US would again become a functioning democracy rather than a nation ruled by unelected judges.
 4. Anthony Kennedy, by himself, is deciding many of the most important decisions facing our country. This is not a democracy.
 5. Relevant biblical principles that apply to the issue of the Supreme Court
 - a. The best safeguard against the abuse of power is divided power.
 - b. This is evident in the erosion of nearly every sphere of moral truth (exclusion of God in the public square, rise of porn, abortion, homosexuality etc.
 6. Individual votes for Democrats or Republicans will decide the future of the nation on this issue

VI. The Protection of Life

A. Abortion

1. The Issue

- a. Question: should the government make laws to protect the lives of the preborn?
- b. If "yes", then further questions are:
 - i. At what point should the preborn child be protected?
 - ii. Should it be called a "fetus", a preborn child or an unborn child?
 - iii. What penalties should be given to those who hurt the preborn?
- c. If "no", then further questions are:
 - i. Should the government pay for women to have abortions?
 - ii. Should doctors who have moral objections to abortions be compelled to perform abortions?

2. Relevant biblical teaching

- a. Preborn children should be treated as a person from the point of conception
 - i. John the Baptist leaped in the womb and was called a "baby" (Luke 1:41-44).
 - The same word for "baby" here is also used for Jesus in the manger (Luke 2:16).
 - ii. King David said, "in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5).
 - iii. King David said, "you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb" (Ps. 139:13).
 - iv. It was said of Rebekah, "... two peoples from within you shall be divided..." (Gen. 25:22-23).
 - v. There were penalties for those who hurt pregnant women:
 - If it causes a premature birth but there is no harm to the mother or the child, the penalty was a fine (Ex. 21:22).
 - If it causes harm to the mother or the child, the penalty is capital punishment (Ex. 21:23-24).
 - This penalty was much more severe than other such "accidental crimes" that would send the offender to the city of refuge. Here, God places a higher value on protecting the life of a pregnant woman and her preborn child than anyone else in society.
 - Thus, if accidental killing is so serious, how much more is intentional killing.
- b. Scientific information on the distinct personhood of the preborn child
 - i. See <http://catholiceducation.org/articles/abortion>
- c. Objections regarding the personhood of the preborn child
 - i. Unable to interact and survive on its own
 - Wrong because newborns are unable to talk.
 - Wrong because newborns are unable to survive on their own.
 - ii. Birth defects
 - Wrong, because we wouldn't do this to newborns. Thus the question is the preborn a person. If he is, then the argument can't stand.

- Wrong, because God makes the child, including disabilities (Ex. 4:11, John 9:2-3).
- iii. Pregnancies resulting from rape or incest
 - Wrong, though this is a difficult and tragic issue, we would never do this to a infant who was born from rape or incest.
 - It is not the fault of the child (Deut. 24:16).
 - Besides, only 1% of abortions come from this situation.
- iv. Abortion to save the life of the mother
 - This only happens .118% of the time.
 - This is not morally wrong; in fact, it would be the right thing to do.
- 3. Arguments from reason and evidence apart from the Bible
 - a. The preborn child is far different from any other part of the woman's body (which is why ultrasounds have stopped many women from having abortions).
 - b. The incalculable loss to the nation from the deaths of more than one million babies per year.
 - c. The instinctive sense that a pregnant woman has a baby in her womb.
- 4. Objections
 - a. A wrongful restriction of freedom
 - i. Some people say that they don't agree with abortion but it's the decision of each person. But this is beside the point. If abortion is wrong, we don't leave it up to the whims of other people.
 - ii. If murder, theft, and drug use is wrong, we can't say, "Its wrong for me, but maybe not for others."
 - b. All children should be wanted children
 - i. This argument says that we should be allowed to kill those who we do not want or love.
 - ii. This is a morally bankrupt argument because it puts the mothers desire for convenience higher than the life of the child.
 - c. "I'm personally against abortion, but I just don't support laws against abortion."
 - i. This is like saying, "I'm personally opposed to drunk driving, but I don't support laws against it."
 - ii. The same argument could go for murder etc.
 - d. "Christians should not try to impose their moral standards on other peoples."
 - i. But all of our laws are based on some kinds of moral convictions.
 - ii. For example, laws against polygamy, sex with minors, drugs, drunkenness and incest are based on moral convictions.
 - iii. The moral standards are: 1) people should not murder and 2) the preborn child should be considered a human.
- 5. Recommendations for Political Policies
 - a. Governments should enact laws prohibiting abortions except to save the life of the mother (Ps. 82:3-4).
 - b. No government policies should promote or fund abortions (1 Peter 2:14).

- c. No government policy should compel people to participate in abortions or to dispense drugs that cause abortions.
- d. No funding or support should be given to the process of creating human embryos or the purpose of destroying them in medical research.
 - i. "Embryo" refers to the preborn children from the moment of conception until the eighth week of pregnancy.
 - ii. Stem cells shouldn't be taken from live embryos for research.
- e. The ban on partial-birth abortions.
- f. The most important legal goal regarding abortion is appointing Supreme Court justices who will overturn Roe v. Wade because no significant restriction on abortions can be made at either the state or national level until the Supreme Court overturns the Roe v. Wade decision.
- g. The seriousness of this issue
 - i. Scripture gives severe warnings to those who hurt children (Jer. 7:30-34)

B. Euthanasia

- 1. The issue
 - a. This is also referred to as "mercy killing."
 - b. It is the act of putting to death an elderly person or one who is terminally ill.
- 2. Bible teaching
 - a. The command against murder
 - i. Exodus 20:13, Matthew 18:19, Romans 13:9
 - ii. King David killed the man who claimed he helped assist King Saul in suicide (2 Sam. 1:1-16), even though Saul asked for it, was terminally ill and in pain.
 - b. Killing versus letting die
 - i. This is more complex than killing. In the killing, the cause of death is the action taken by another person. In letting die, the cause of death is the disease or injury or again process that has already been occurring.
 - ii. We should not help a person die when 1) there is a reasonable hope of recovery 2) we are able to help (love your neighbor).
 - iii. On the other hand, in cases where 1) there is no reasonable human hope of recovery and 2) it is the patient's wish to be allowed to die, and/or 3) we are unable to help (like a person trapped in a car etc.), then it may be right to allow the person to die.
 - iv. We ought to leave our lives in God's hands (Luke 23:46, Acts 7:59, Gen. 49:33, Heb. 2:15 and 1 Cor. 15:55-57).
 - v. Modern medicine should be used to alleviate the pain and suffering of a terminally ill patient (Matt. 7:12 and 22:39).
- 3. Arguments from reason and evidence apart from the Bible
 - a. Soon, people will be put to death apart from their will.
 - b. Horrific quote from Dr. Phillip Nitschke.
- 4. Objections
 - a. The value of protecting human freedom, even freedom to end one's own life.

- i. There are many cases where a person "just wants to die", but this doesn't give us the right to end it. It is still morally wrong.
 - b. The need to alleviate pain and frustration.
 - i. Again, we should seek to alleviate pain, not life.
 - c. The need to save on resources and money.
 - i. This argument essentially says it is right to kill people who are costing too much to care for.
- 5. Recommendation for political policies
 - a. Governmental laws against murder should continue to be applied to cases of euthanasia.
- 6. The importance of this issue
 - a. Euthanasia erodes the protection of human life.
- C. Capital Punishment
 - 1. The issue
 - a. Should government take the life of a person who has been convicted of certain crimes?
 - b. The death penalty usually covers matters like premeditated murder, treason, mass destruction, espionage, aggravated rape, kidnapping and hijacking.
 - 2. The relevant biblical teaching
 - a. Genesis 9:5-6 provides the foundation for human government
 - b. Romans 13:1-7 is the first of two primary New Testament passages that teach about civil government.
 - i. Government is the avenger who carries out God's wrath on the evildoer.
 - ii. The Government does not put people to death in vain (v.4). That is, "sword" is often a synonym for putting to death.
 - c. First Peter 2:13-14 is the second primary passage on civil government in the New Testament.
 - d. But is it right to desire that government punish a criminal?
 - i. Many think that the loving thing to do is sweeping forgiveness.
 - ii. But this is not the solution in Romans 12:19. We should not seek *personal revenge* but for justice to be done.
 - iii. Revelation 6:9-10 confirms that we should long for justice and vengeance.
 - e. What crimes are worthy of capital punishment?
 - i. Of course murder, but are there other crimes similar enough to murder in the degree of evil that deserve capital punishment?
 - ii. Rules for capital punishment for Israel in the Mosaic Law should not necessarily apply today.
 - iii. Some possible examples:
 - Perjury resulting in wrongful death of a falsely accused person.
 - Espionage resulting in death.
 - Crimes against the state (e.g. treason).
 - Kidnapping
 - Rape

- f. Argument from reason and evidence apart from the Bible (e.g. it deters violence)

3. Objections

a. Objections from the Bible

- i. Exodus 20:13 – “You shall not murder”
 - The sense of this verse is the taking of innocent life. The word used here is not that which is used for judicial execution.
- ii. Matthew 5:38-39 – “turn the other cheek”
 - This is given to individual persons, not the responsibility of governments.
- iii. Matthew 22:39 – “Love your neighbor”
 - In the same context that Jesus is quoting from (Lev. 19:18), God commanded the death penalty.
- iv. Matthew 26:52 – “all who take the sword will perish by the sword”
 - Peter did not have to give up carrying his sword, just not right to use it to prevent Christ’s crucifixion.
- v. John 8:2-11 – Jesus didn’t condemn the adulteress
 - The story is about adultery, not murder
- vi. “We should follow the teachings of Jesus”
- vii. God spared some murderers such as Cain and King David
 - This changes the subject from the responsibility of civil government to the freedom of God. God can do as He wishes. This does not say what He wants civil governments to do.

b. Objections to the death penalty based on results and fairness

- i. It does not deter crime
 - Most stats say that this is true.
 - Deterrence is valid biblically (Eccl. 8:11).
- ii. Innocent people might be put to death
 - This is very rare; not to use the death penalty is to pollute the land (Num 35:32-34).
- iii. Violence begets more violence
- iv. There are racial or economic disparities in the death penalty
 - Racism is wrong, not the death penalty.

4. Recommendations about laws and policies

- a. The death penalty for cases of premeditated murder
- b. Use wisdom for other cases that are not murder

5. The importance of this issue

- a. God in both the OT and NT teach that government should carry out the death penalty.
- b. It satisfies a deep human sense that just punishment is required when a murder has been committed.
- c. It satisfies God’s requirements for the just punishment that societies should carry out.
- d. It acts as an important deterrent to the horrible crime of murder.

D. Self-Defense and Ownership of Guns

1. The relevant biblical teaching

- a. Is it right to defend ourselves and others from physical attacks when we are able to do so?
 - i. Jesus was not prohibiting self-defense when He commanded us to turn the other cheek (Matt. 5:38-39). He is prohibiting personal vengeance. We are not to hit back when others insult us. These are examples of what Christ-like conduct should look like, not absolute commands.
 - ii. David avoided Saul's attempt to harm him (I Sam. 19:10). Paul escaped in a basket (2 Cor. 11:32-33). Jesus escaped an angry crowd (Luke 4:29-30).
 - iii. Jesus seemed to encourage his disciples to have swords for self-defense (Luke 22:36-38).
 - iv. God wants us to protect our bodies (1 Cor. 6:19-20).
 - b. Is it right for a person to use a weapon for self-defense?
 - i. Luke 22:36ff and Matt. 26:52 seems to support using weapons for self-defense.
 - ii. Some weapons are needed to defend oneself against those who are stronger.
 - c. Is it right to use a gun for self-defense?
 - i. If it was right to carry a sword for self-defense, it seems fitting that a gun is permissible.
 - ii. It is a deterrent to many kinds of crime.
2. In nations where there is already widespread possession of guns, the laws should allow private citizens to own guns for self-defense
 3. Do gun-control laws reduce gun crime?
 - a. Most statistics say that it does not.
 - b. Carrying guns seems to reduce crime.
 - c. In 1993, for every crime committed with a gun, there were 12,653 guns that were not used in a murder.
 4. The current legal situation in the US and the 2nd Amendment
 - a. This amendment allows people to carry guns who are not in the military or the militia.
 - b. This amendment protects from tyranny, so that it would be difficult to control the people with an army or strong hand.
 - c. The requirement to keep guns locked and unloaded prohibits their intended use.
 5. Recommendations about laws and policies
 - a. Law should guarantee that citizens have the right to possess some kind of effective means of self-defense
 - b. The right to own guns should be protected by the law
 - c. Governments should place reasonable restrictions on gun ownership
 - d. Should an individual Christian own a gun?
 - i. This is as matter of individual preference and personal decision

VII. **Marriage**

A. Biblical Teaching: Marriage is only between one man and one woman

1. God created marriage at the beginning of the human race as a lifelong union between one man and one woman.
 - a. Gen. 1:27-28
 - b. They were "man and wife" (Gen. 2:25)
 - c. They were the pattern for all marriages to follow on the earth (Gen. 2:24)
 - d. Marriage is the union between one man and one woman for life (Matt. 19:3-6).
Because of sin, however, God later allowed for some divorce.
2. God's definition of marriage was not for the Jewish people only, but was intended to apply to all people in all societies for all time.
 - a. These laws were given from the beginning, long before the Jews were created as a nation.
 - b. Thus, we find many examples of non-Jews being judged for breaking God's plan for marriage.
 - i. Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19)
 - ii. Pharaoh (Gen. 12)
 - iii. Herod Antipas (Mark 6:17-18)
 - iv. The Canaanites (Lev. 18:6-23)
 - c. Marriage between a man and a woman is the most fundamental institution in any society.
 - i. Marriage is the first institution God creates (including government, nations, law etc.).

B. Incest, Adultery and Homosexuality are prohibited in Biblical ethics

1. Incest is prohibited in Leviticus 18:1-18, 20:11-20 and 1 Cor. 5:1-2
2. Adultery is prohibited in Exodus 20:14
3. Homosexuality is prohibited in Lev. 18:22, Lev. 20:13, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Cor. 6:9-11 and 1 Tim. 1:9-10.

C. What about Polygamy in the OT?

1. God temporarily allowed polygamy to occur by not giving explicit commands against it, even though it does not fit with Genesis 1-2.
2. Every example we have of polygamy in the OT ends in some kind of difficulty and trouble (Gen. 16; 29-31; 1 Sam. 1; 1 Kings 11).
3. It is horribly dehumanizing for women.

D. Divorce

1. Some OT passages assume that divorce would occur (Deut. 24:1-4, Lev. 21:7, 14 and Numb. 30:9).
2. The most common interpretation of the NT understanding on divorce since the Protestant Reformation has allowed divorce for adultery and also allowed remarriage in such cases:
 - a. Matt. 19:9; The implication is that a man who divorces his wife for adultery and remarries does not commit adultery.
 - b. Paul allows divorce where an unbelieving spouse deserts a believer (1 Cor. 7:15).

E. Civil government should define marriage for all citizens.

1. Defining and regulating marriage fits the purposes of government according to the Bible.
 - a. Marriage restrains evil.
 - b. Marriage brings good to society.
 - c. Marriage brings order to society
2. Defining and regulating marriage is morally right
 - a. Def. – “a lifelong faithful union between one man and one woman.”

F. Arguments About Marriage from reason and experience apart from the Bible

1. Governments should define and establish marriage because no other institution can do that for an entire society.
 - a. If no definition is given, then society is in chaos.
 - b. Churches and societies are unable to do this, as they speak for only their members.
 - c. This also protects children, who are unable to vote for themselves. A government who properly defines marriage protects children from being raised in homes of incest, homosexuality, parents of adolescents and polygamy.
2. Government should encourage and reward marriage between one man and one woman because it gives benefits to society that no other relationship or institution can give.
 - a. For example, Utah could not become a state (eventually 1896) until it agreed to ban polygamy.
 - b. The benefits are:
 - i. Marriage provides the best environment for having babies.
 - ii. Married couples raise and nurture children best.
 - Children with two married parents have higher educational achievement.
 - Children with two married parents are more economically stable.
 - Children with two married parents have better emotional and physical health.
 - Children with two married parents are less likely to commit crimes.
 - Children with two married parents are less likely to face abuse.
 - iii. Marriage leads to a higher economic standard.
 - iv. Marriage encourages sexual faithfulness.
 - v. Marriage protects from sexually transmitted diseases.
 - c. The more government gives benefits to polygamous or homosexual relationships, to that degree the less they are supporting traditional marriage.
 - d. Homosexual behavior has numerous harmful affects (Grudem lists 6, including some egregious stats regarding the number of partners most homosexuals have).

G. Legal Arguments about Marriage

1. Appeals courts in the United States have repeatedly held that the State has a legitimate interest in protecting marriage between one man and one woman.
2. No right to polygamous marriages is found in the US Constitution.
3. No right to “homosexual marriage” is found in the Constitution.
4. Restricting marriage to one man and woman does not violate anyone’s fundamental rights.
 - a. For example: no one would support a man wanting the legal right to marry his sister.
 - b. Thus, there are a whole host of “rights” that we have lived without for years.

5. A marriage amendments to the US Constitution would be the most effective way to establish a uniform understanding of marriage once again in the US.

6. Recommendations About Specific Laws and Policies Related to Marriage

- a. Marriage should be defined by government for society as a whole.
- b. Laws should define marriage as a union between one man and one woman.
- c. Laws should make other restrictions on marriages that reflects historical standards.
 - i. It should be the proper age.
 - ii. It should be by consent.
 - iii. It should be by those not already married.
 - iv. It should not be between those in the same family.
- d. Homosexual marriage should not be granted the status of "marriage".
- e. Known homosexuals should continue to be prohibited from military service.
- f. Private organizations such as the Boy Scouts should continue to be allowed to exclude homosexuals from employment as scoutmasters.
- g. Should homosexual conduct itself be against the law?
 - i. Sodomy laws were somewhat common even as recently as 2003.
 - ii. Though contrary to Scripture, it shouldn't be against the law since the majority of the nation would be against this.

H. Pornography

1. The issue: should government restrict the production and distribution of porn?
2. Scriptural teaching
 - a. Sexual immorality is wrong (Exodus 20:14, John 8:41, Acts 15:20, 1 Cor. 6:18, 7:2, 1 Thess. 4:3).
 - b. Immorality in the mind is also sin (Ex. 20:17, Prov. 6:25, Matt. 5:27, 28).
 - c. A perfect illustration is Ezekiel 23:14-17
 - d. The moral question: is it right to create, to distribute, to acquire, and to view photographs or videos, or written material, or audio material who primary purpose is to arouse in people sexual desires that are contrary to God's moral standards.
3. Arguments from reason and experience apart from the Bible
 - a. It will have bad affects on marriage and will create a spirit of deception.
 - b. False messages sent by our culture:
 - i. Sex with anyone at anytime if it is desired is beneficial and has no negative consequences.
 - ii. Women have one value—to meet the sexual demands of men.
 - iii. Marriage and children are obstacles to sexual fulfillment.
 - iv. Everyone is involved in sexual promiscuity, infidelity and premarital sex.
 - c. Four step progression for those who consume pornography:
 - i. Addiction
 - ii. Escalation
 - iii. Desensitization
 - iv. Acting out sexually
 - d. Crime is dramatically higher where adult businesses are

4. What laws should governments make regarding pornography?
 - a. Just because something is against the Bible doesn't mean there should be laws against it (e.g. laziness, drunkenness etc.).
 - b. But since porn is distributed and has such a great damage on society, there should be laws against it.
5. The definition of pornography
 - a. The average person sees the dominant theme of the material as appealing to sexual interest (according to 1957 *Roth v. United States*).
 - b. Attorney General's Commission on Pornography definition: "sexually explicit material designed primarily for arousal."

VIII. The Family

- A. Governments should encourage married couples to bear and raise children
 - 1. Scripture has a very high view of bearing and rearing children (Gen. 1:27-28).
 - 2. God desires for his people to bear more children (Ps. 127:3, Mal. 2:15, 1 Tim. 5:14, Deut. 28:4, Hosea 1:10).
 - 3. There are many reasons for having children, one being that if couples don't have at least as many children as they are, society will dwindle and less young people will have to support the old.
 - a. This is common in Europe.
 - b. This will hit America hard with Social Security and Medicare
- B. Parents, not the Government, should have the primary responsibility for training their children
 - 1. Scripture so often put the responsibility on the parents, not on "society"
 - a. Moses told the parents to teach their children the Scriptures (Deut. 6:4-7)
 - b. Proverbs is full of commands to fathers and mothers (1:8, 4:1, 6:20, 10:1, 13:1, 15:20, 23:22, 31:1).
 - c. Very common in the NT as well (Eph. 6:1-4, Col. 3:20-21).
 - 2. Implications for governmental policy regarding families and children:
 - a. Parents, not the government, should have the freedom to decide how best to educate their children.
 - i. This is the opposite of communist countries , who take children from their parents at a young age in order to indoctrinate them.
 - ii. In Germany, they will take children from schools and force them into state-run schools (homeschooling is illegal; one couple was imprisoned for three months for homeschooling their children).
 - iii. We should not say that *all* public education is bad, as long as we understand that it is not replacing the responsibility of the parents.
- C. A school voucher system should be adopted by every school district
 - 1. The benefits (that is, government money to enter any public or private school of their choice):
 - a. More parental influence
 - b. Healthy competition
 - c. Would allow parents the choice to send children to those schools that reflect their worldview.
 - d. Children would be better educated
 - 2. The reason the NEA so vehemently opposes even small experiments with vouchers with private institutions is because they know it will do a much better job of educating children if they compete on an equal basis.
 - 3. Objections: parents will use these for church-based schools, thus supporting religion.
Problems:
 - a. Government is not supporting religion, the parents are.

- b. Remember, the First Amendment was only to prevent the government from establishing of one official state church, not to prevent all government-support for everything that is done by a church.
 - c. The monopoly of the public school system is in disarray because it forbids school choice. Bad teachers who can't teach and can't control the class can't be fired because of the power of the teacher's unions.
- D. Discipline of children and spanking
- 1. "Discipline" is part of the responsibility of parenting (Eph. 6:4, Heb. 12:9-11).
 - 2. Many countries around the world have made this illegal.
 - 3. Scripture speaks of inflicting pain on children in order to reprove them (Prov. 13:24, 22:15, 23:13-14, 29:15).
 - 4. It should not surprise us that non-Christians seek to abolish spanking; they don't believe that there is tendency to evil.

IX. Economics

A. Private Property

1. The Bible assumes and reinforces that property belongs to individuals, not to government or society.
 - a. "Don't Steal" in Exodus 20:15.
 - b. Don't covet anything of your neighbor (Ex. 20:17). I shouldn't covet my neighbor's things because he owns them.
 - c. Laws concerning punishing stealing and restitution for damage of another person's animals or agriculture fields (Ex. 21:28-36; 22:1-15; Deut. 22:1-4; 23:24-25).
 - d. Some commands guarantee property boundaries (Deut. 19:14; cf. Prov. 22:28).
 - e. In the Year of Jubilee, property was returned to the family that originally owned it (Lev. 25:10, 23).
 - f. While God essentially "owns" everything (Ps. 24:1, Ps. 50:10-12), we are His stewards to care for his land.
 - g. Samuel warned the people of the kings who would "take" and "take" their things (1 Sam. 10-18).
 - h. Scripture tells the tragic story of the theft of Naboth's vineyard by the wicked king Ahab (1 Kings 21:1-29).
 - i. As God's image bearers (Gen. 1:27), we are to imitate Him (Eph. 5:1) in the way we care for our possessions and thank Him for them (Col. 3:15).
2. Private ownership is in direct opposition to Marx's communist system.
 - a. There theory can be summarized in a single sentence: abolition of private property.
 - b. When this happens, government controls all economic activity (and thus, what you buy, where you live, work etc.). Thus they controls everything and the people are imprisoned.
3. Even some "capitalist" countries make personal ownership difficult.
 - a. Example: the Peruvian de Soto who tried to register a small business (it took 289 days working 6 hours a day!).
 - b. He later argued that one of the most important factors of economic development of a nation is a system where ownership of private property is easily documented and publicly known.
 - c. American examples: the government purchase of Bank of America etc. and the nation's health care system (comprises 18% of the nation's GDP).

B. Economic Development

1. Government should promote economic growth in a nation.
 - a. This is a part of their duty to "do good" (Rom. 13:4).
 - b. One of God's original purposes for man was for him to make it productive (Gen. 1:28).
 - c. Sometimes God punishes people by hindering productivity (Gen. 3:17-19; Deut. 28:15-68).
 - d. God often blesses people by giving material blessing (Deut. 8:7-10, 11:10-17).

- e. We should help the poor; this shows that poverty is not “desirable” (Gal. 2:10; 1 John 3:17). It is good to work with our hands (like Jesus [Mark 6:3] and Paul [Acts 18:3]).
- f. Summary: though temptations accompany production and ownership (pride, envy, laziness etc.), God’s purpose for humanity throughout Scripture has been that they produce and enjoy useful things from the earth. In fact, when the wealth of a nation increases, it is easier to fulfill many of God’s commands (raising children, evangelism).

C. The Money Supply

1. Government should establish and maintain an effective money supply for a nation.
2. A monetary system is good because it alleviates the need to barter with other goods; it allows us to buy and sell with less difficulty.
3. Money is a measure of value, and money itself carries value until we use it to purchase something else of value.
4. Inflation
 - a. Government is the best solution to provide this monetary system, though in order for this system to work, the value of the currency must remain stable over time. Hyperinflation destroys this system. Examples:
 - i. Man agrees to paint room for \$200, but over the next few days, the price of bread jumps from \$4 to \$400.
 - ii. Hungary—July 1946: 207% daily inflation. Prices doubled every 15 hours.
 - iii. Zimbabwe—November 2008: 98% daily inflation rate.
 - iv. Germany—October 1923: 21% daily inflation. Prices doubled every 3.7 days.
 - b. Inflation like this destroys the economy of any nation because the rules of the game change half way through. Inflation is dishonesty (Prov. 20:10 applies here).
 - c. Conclusion: Government should establish a money supply for a nation and should keep its value relatively stable over time.
5. What causes inflation?
 - a. An increase of money supply causes inflation (e.g. half way through a monopoly game, the money supply is doubled for each person).
 - b. The Obama administration did this in 2009 by pumping reserves into the financial system by purchasing \$1.2 trillion assets (from companies like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac).
 - c. “The wicked borrows but does not pay back” (Ps. 37:21).

D. Free Markets and Regulation

1. Government regulations are good in some areas (enforcing contracts, safety standards on medicine and foods, cleanliness regulations for restaurants, weight and measurements like gasoline or milk). Also to provide certain goods that everyone uses (roads, army, police, postal service).
2. Some prefer:
 - a. Free market
 - b. Socialism (government owns and controls most of the business and factories)
 - c. Communism (government owns and controls not only the means of production but also all property).

3. Reasons the Free Market is the best

- a. Scripture never indicates that government should own businesses or property.
- b. Scripture warns against those who "take" what rightfully belongs to others.
- c. Scripture indicates that property belongs to individuals.
- d. Scripture emphasizes human liberty and making choices individually.
- e. History demonstrates that better results come for the free market.

4. Definition of Free Market – A wonderful, God-given process in human societies through which good and services that are produced by the society (supply) continually adjust to exactly match the good and services that are wanted by the society (demand) at each period of time, and through which the society assigns a measurable value to each good and service at each period of time, entirely through the free choices of every individual person in the society rather than through government control.

5. Better Results of the Free Market

- a. It is better than government control in produces goods and services. That is, it produces goods people actually want rather than what the government says you should want (like the difference between East and West Germany, the only difference being the economic system). Government control destroys economic productivity.
- b. It allows people freedom to work at the jobs they choose and encourages them to get better training.
- c. It gives employers the freedom to hire those who are best suited for the job.
- d. It provides greater customer satisfaction.
- e. It can accurately predict the economic wants of millions so people. All of this with no governmental oversight! A good example: a pencil (and all that went into manufacturing it).

E. The Rich and the Poor

1. Government and the rich

- a. Most people assume that the rich have gotten their wealth unjustly.
- b. Scripture says, however, that we are to treat people justly and fairly, not more just because they have more money.
- c. "To impose a fine on a righteous man is not good, nor to strike the noble for their uprightness (Prov. 17:26).
- d. Many of the rich have not become that way by doing evil or exploiting people. They have provided goods and services for people like us.

2. Government and economic equality

- a. The government should not attempt to equalize the difference between the rich and the poor by heavily taxing the rich.
- b. Some people have more skills and abilities than others. Some have good habits, some do not. Furthermore, if the government gave everyone \$100k, after a few weeks, some would have more and some would have none. It can't possibly keep things equal.

3. Government and poverty

- a. Scripture says that we should help the poor (Rom. 15:25-26, Gal. 2:10, 1 John 3:17).

- b. However, this is individuals giving, not the government.
- c. Every successful business gives people economically productive jobs for which they are paid, and in that way it contributes value to the society.
- d. Thus, those who want to help the poor should not promote government handouts but to provide incentives for privately owned businesses to grow and thrive and thus provide jobs. This will give them dignity and self-respect.

F. Government and Business

- 1. Private business are the primary creator of wealth and productive jobs in a society and should not be penalized by the government.
- 2. The competitive free market continually rewards those who improve their productivity and the quality of their products, while keeping their prices low.
- 3. Competition is good for the economy.
- 4. Government, however, has to compete with no one and is generally a poor creator of wealth in an economy. In fact, it is difficult to think of any goods and services that a government might produce that could not be produced better by private companies.

G. Taxes

- 1. Does government have the right to collect taxes? – Yes, it is right to pay taxes to the civil government, as it is the right of government to collect taxes to carry out their responsibilities (Matt. 22:17-21; Rom. 13:6-7).
- 2. Should tax rates be high or low in an economy?
 - a. Taxes shouldn't be 0% or 100% but the more taxes, the less freedom we have to do with our money what we want.
 - b. Further, governments are notorious for waste and inefficiency.
- 3. The benefit of lower taxes
 - a.
 - b.

H. The Social Security System

I. Health Care

- J. What is the best cure for recessions?

X. The Environment

A. Biblical Teaching

B. The Current State of the Earth's Resources

C. Energy Resources and Energy Uses

D. Global Warming and Carbon Fuels

E. Café Standards for Automobile Mileage

F. Cap and Trade

XI. National Defense

A. Biblical Teaching

- 1. Governments are responsible to defend their nations from attacks by other nations.
 - a. Government is to punish evil doers (Rom. 13). It does this by defending the weak.

- b. Government is authorized by God to "bear the sword" in order to be a terror to bad conduct (Rom. 13:3-4). This is their moral obligation.
- c. Israel had to defend itself against attacks from the Philistines, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians. God often blessed them by giving them victory (Judg. 2:16-18; 1 Sam. 17; 2 Sam. 5:17-25). God judged them by causing them to lose wars (Judg. 2:13-15).
- d. It is a good thing in God's sight when a government is able to defend itself against its enemies.
- e. The sixth commandment prohibits murder, not killing in war. The Hebrew word here is NEVER used for killing in war.
- f. God sometimes commanded people to go to war (Deut. 20:1).
- g. The NT doesn't condemn the occupation of soldier (Luke 3:14; also Cornelius).

B. How Can We Know If a War is a "Just War"?

- 1. Just cause (good reasons)
- 2. Competent authority
- 3. Comparative justice (enemy is morally wrong, we are morally right)
- 4. Right intention (purpose to protect justice)
- 5. Last resort
- 6. Probability of success
- 7. Proportionality of projected results (pros better than cons)
- 8. Right spirit
- 9. Proportionality in the use of force (not more than needed)
- 10. Discriminate between soldiers and civilians
- 11. Avoidance of evil means
- 12. Good faith

C. Pacifism

- 1. Common arguments
 - a. Turn the other cheek (Matt. 5:39).
 - b. Love our neighbors as self (Matt. 22:39).
 - c. Fails to trust God
 - d. Violence begets more violence
- 2. Objections
 - a. Matthew 5:39 prohibits personal vengeance. Romans 13:4 and Luke 22:36 encourages weapons and just retribution.
 - b. If we really love our neighbor, we will even go to war to protect them.
 - c. Loving and going to war is possible (see David vs. his son Absalom in 2 Sam. 18).
 - d. We are to "trust" what Scripture says; we are not to trust God to provide if we don't work.

Violence begets violence is not true.

D. Defense Policy in the United States

E. Islamic Jihadism (International Terrorism)

F. Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

G. Nuclear Weapons

- H. The CIA
- I. Coercive Interrogation of Prisoners
- J. Homosexual in the Military
- K. Women in Combat
 - 1. Women should not be in combat
 - 2. See: Num 1:2-3; Deut. 3:18-19; 20:7-8; 24:5; Josh. 1:14; 23:10; Judg. 4:8-10; 9:54; 1 Sam. 4:9; Neh. 4:13-14; Jer. 50:37; Nah. 3:13).

XII. **Foreign Policy**

- A. Biblical Teaching
- B. The United Nations
- C. Foreign Aid
- D. Israel
- E. Immigration

XIII. **Freedom of Speech**

- A. Biblical Teaching
- B. The United States Constitution
- C. Restrictions on Freedom of Speech
- D. Campaign Finance Restrictions
- E. Campus "Hate Speech" Cods and Other Restrictions of Free Speech on College Campuses
- F. The "Fairness Doctrine" and Talk Radio

XIV. **Freedom of Religion**

- A. Biblical and Constitutional Background
 - 1. The basis for freedom of religion is Matthew 22:21: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."
 - 2. Governments should not compel religion, else it wouldn't be genuine. Nor should it support one particular religion, as stated in the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the exercise thereof..."
 - 3. However, the SC has distorted this meaning. The original intent was not to say that government officials could not freely express their own religious beliefs in public or at functions only that one official religion should not be established. Worship services were often held at the Capitol itself. Lincoln set aside a day for national prayer and humiliation.
 - 4. "Separation of church and state" is found nowhere in the Constitution.
- B. Religion expression in the public square
 - 1. The Navy typically broke down its chaplains into three divisions: liturgical Protestant, Catholic, and non-liturgical Protestant. This didn't force religion, as men had the choice.
 - 2. Thus, a city counsel opening in prayer is their discretion, as it is not *compelling* anyone to *accept* a particular religion. The Constitution has never forbid opening public meetings with prayer; it is lawful and has always been apart of our religious heritage.

3. Public displays for Christmas is ok as well, as it does not compel anyone to support the Christian religion.
- C. "Faith-Based" Programs
- D. Political Advocacy By Churches and Their Tax-exempt Status

XV. **Special Groups**

- A. Why the Topics in This Chapter are Different from Earlier Chapters
- B. Regulators: Invisible Bureaucrats Who Regulate People's Lives
- C. Earmarks
- D. Affirmative Action
 1. Definition – government policies that give preferential treatment to members of certain minorities in education, in employment, and in awarding of government contracts to businesses.
 2. Arguments Pro:
 - a. Promote diverse representation
 - b. Need to overcome past discrimination
 3. Disadvantages
 - a. They are inherently discriminatory.
 - b. Less qualified people get jobs
 - c. Builds feelings of resentment
 - d. Affirmative actions actually hurts blacks in America, especially lawyers. More are allowed in despite their lower grades, so when then more fail the bar exam. If AA was taken away, their fail rate would be similar to white fail rates.
- E. Gender-based Quotas
- F. Farm Subsidies
- G. Tariffs
- H. Trial Lawyers, Medical Malpractice Awards, and Reform of Tort Law
- I. The National Education Association
- J. Native Americans (American Indians)
- K. **Gambling**
 1. Gross revenue for legal gambling in the US for 2007 was 92 billion.
 2. Some argue that it brings in business and entertainment and jobs.
 3. Negative effects:
 - a. Most gamblers are poor (thus getting in more debt).
 - b. Leads to addiction, leading to breakdowns of family and career.
 - c. Where there is gambling, crime rates increase.
 4. It is unwise for Christians to gamble because:
 - a. It focuses on fast money rather than hard work, saving, and skill development.
 - b. It is addicting.

PART 3: CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

XVI. The Problem of Media Bias: When the Watchdogs Fall Asleep

- A. Public Perceptions of Media Bias
- B. Surveys of Journalists
- C. What Happens to a Nation When Its Watchdogs Are Silent?

XVII. Application to Democratic and Republican Policies Today

- A. The Courts and Ultimate Power in a Nation
- B. Protection of Life
- C. Marriage
- D. The Family
- E. Economic Policies
- F. The Environment
- G. National Defense
- H. Relationships With Other Nations
- I. Freedom of Speech
- J. Freedom of Religion
- K. Special Groups Within the Nation
- L. Media Bias
- M. Why Do the Two Parties Adopt These Different Policies?

XVIII. Faith and Works, and Trusting God While Working in Politics and Government

- A. What Does It Mean to Trust God's Sovereignty Over the Direction of World History?
- B. The Future: Will the US Become a Better or Worse Nation in the Next Few Decades?
- C. The Details of Revival: What Might It Look Like If God Brought About a Revival of the Church and a Transformation of the Nation for Good?