

Church and State (Government)

-Should They Come Together or Be Separate?

[S6]

**Remember to Pray for Wisdom Before You Begin*

- 1.) On what principle does God establish His kingdom which is found throughout the Bible? **Leviticus 25:10** And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim _____ throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall _____ every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his _____. **Psalm 119:45** And I will walk at _____: for I seek thy precepts. **Isaiah 61:1** The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim _____ to the _____, and the opening of the _____ to them that are bound; **2Corinthians 3:17** Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is _____. **Galatians 5:13** For, brethren, ye have been called unto _____; only use not _____ for an occasion to the _____, but by _____ serve one another. **NOTE: God is a God Who loves liberty. He wants all His creatures to have freedom. That's why human beings have been given the power and freedom of choice. They are free-moral agents with the capacity of free choice. The use of force will never be used by a God of love. True love will give freedom to another without any coercion. Especially in the area of worship, God desires only free-will worship and service. In a sin-tainted world where selfishness abounds it is easy for this principle of liberty to be abused and/or withheld.**
- 2.) Is it important for there to be governments or civil power in our world today? **Romans 13:1** Let _____ soul be _____ unto the higher _____. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are _____ of God. **2** Whosoever therefore _____ the power, resisteth the _____ of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves _____. **3** For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the _____. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: **4** For he is the _____ of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be _____; for he beareth not the _____ in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute _____ upon him that _____ evil. **1Peter 2:17** Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the _____. **NOTE: Imagine for a moment if everyone in our society were to do what every person felt like doing with nobody in authority with no regulations or laws. That would be frightening wouldn't it? Chaos would reign. Nobody would be safe. In only a little while our chaotic world would end in self-destruction! Even in a sin-cursed world, God knew we would need organized governments as imperfect as its human leaders would be. Keep in mind the circumstances when the Apostle Paul and Peter penned the words above. The earthly**

governments they were connected with, particularly the leadership, was corrupt and even brutal at times. But overall, from day-to-day throughout the Roman empire life for the most part, was sane and the majority who were law-abiding were able to lead normal lives. God is a God of law and order and His whole universe especially where sin hasn't marred anything runs like a finely tuned watch! In His Divine mercy and wisdom He has placed "checks & balances" in this world so that life can exist until the sin problem is finally solved and eradicated.

- 3.) What is the purpose or role of civil authority according to scripture? Romans 13:3,4** For _____ are not a terror to good works, but to the _____. Wilt thou then not be _____ of the power? do that which is _____, and thou shalt have praise of the same: **4** For he is the _____ of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be _____; for he _____ not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a _____ to execute _____ upon him that doeth evil. **NOTE: "to execute wrath" basically means to exercise or execute justice on those who are a menace in society. A small example of simple laws that are enforced would be "speed limits" on our highways. It would be quite unnerving and frankly frightening if anyone could drive as fast as they want. You can be sure that many more lives would be lost if it weren't for these beneficent laws!**
- 4.) What is the main purpose for these laws? 1Timothy 1:9** Knowing this, that the law is not made for a _____ man, but for the _____ and _____, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for _____ of fathers and murderers of _____, for manslayers,
- 5.) In what ways are Christians counseled to respect civil authority? Titus 3:1** Put them in mind to be _____ to _____ and powers, to obey _____, to be ready to every good work, **1Peter 2:13** _____ yourselves to every _____ of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the _____, as supreme; **14** Or unto _____, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of _____, and for the praise of them that do well. **Romans 13:6, 7** For for this cause pay ye _____ also: for they are God's ministers, attending _____ upon this very thing. **7** Render therefore to all their dues: _____ to whom tribute is _____; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom _____. **NOTE: These principles are basically rooted from the deeper eternal principle of the 5th commandment. The highest authority to a baby or little child is its parents. The family is but a small building block in the overall structure of society. If this single building block becomes fractured or dysfunctional in any way, it can eventually lead to the breakdown of civilization in general. Christians should not only have stable and happy homes but they should as far as possible be the best loyal citizens of any nation or government.**

6.) Is there a limit on how far we can obey government law? Acts 4:18 And they called them, and _____ them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of _____. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be _____ in the sight of God to hearken unto you _____ than unto _____, judge ye. Acts 5:29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to _____ God rather than _____. Isaiah 10:1 _____ unto them that decree unrighteous _____, and that write grievousness which they have _____; **NOTE: Obviously when human laws and edicts conflict with God's law, we must obey God's law regardless of the consequences! There are several outstanding examples in the Bible where individuals had to stand in defiance of civil law in order to obey the law of God. We will look at some of these, then reach a surprising but irrefutable conclusion in regards to the issue of church and state and what the boundaries are, if any.**

7.) What incident in the Old Testament is a classic example of having to defy a government decree in the face of death in order to obey God's law? Daniel 3:4-6 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is _____, O people, nations, and languages, 5 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye _____ down and _____ the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the _____ hath set up: 6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be _____ into the midst of a _____ fiery furnace. **NOTE: To obey this government decree would require disobedience to God's explicit command in the 1st and 2nd commandment not to worship or have any gods before the God of heaven and earth.**

8.) How did the three Hebrew captives respond to the king of Babylon in their stand on this issue? Daniel 3:16-18 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not _____ to answer thee in this matter. 17 If it be so, our _____ whom we _____ is able to _____ us from the burning fiery furnace, and he _____ deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will _____ serve thy gods, nor _____ the golden _____ which thou hast set up. **NOTE: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were very firm in their stand in refusing to obey this law even if God chose not to deliver them. They knew their God would give them eternal life in the end time resurrection. Nothing stands clearer in the demonstration of loyalty to the God of heaven than obeying and serving Him unto death, even a horrible death at that!**

9.) What was the king's response after the three Hebrew's miraculous deliverance? Daniel 3:28 Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, _____ be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and _____ his servants that _____ in him, and have _____ the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not _____ nor _____ any god, except their own God. **NOTE: By preserving these young men from the fate of a man-made decree He showed that religion is outside the legitimate authority of civil power. There is a boundary that civil power should never**

cross particularly when it has to do with whom, how and when we worship or serve - such as the first four commandments of the Decalogue (our duty to God).

10.) What other example do we see in the book of Daniel of the need to obey God first?

Daniel 6:4,5 Then the presidents and princes _____ to find occasion against Daniel concerning the _____; but they could find none occasion nor _____; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there _____ error or fault found in him. **5** Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, _____ we find it against him _____ the _____ of his God. **NOTE: Here we see that the prophet Daniel was a faithful citizen of the Medo-Persian empire. The other princes couldn't find anywhere in which Daniel broke the laws of the land. But they knew if a law could be legislated that conflicted with his loyalty to the God of heaven they would have him trapped! This scripture makes quite plain where we have to draw the line in our service to civil law versus God's supreme law. True religious freedom means that the state should never legislate any kind of religious law that infringes on whom and how we worship. Contrary to popular opinion, for this reason "church and state" should never be united. Some may argue, "what is wrong to have our government to be united and influenced by Christians and Christian principles?" There is nothing wrong with Christian people running our government, but when they legislate laws on how we worship God, this potentially goes against individual conscience. History reveals that it never works!**

Logically the next question we would have to ask is, if the church tells the government what to do –who decides what church or denomination should have the power and authority? Do you see the obvious problem in this? Some classes of people maybe large numbers of them would be discriminated against –very dangerous! Make sure you do the Bible study on the "Mark of the Beast." This issue (on the mark of the beast) is not only a religious issue, it will be "Christian" in its make-up. This is why the issue of "church and state" is so critical! Every sincere Christian should do a Bible study on this topic and become well-informed of what the "mark of the Beast" is all about!

11.) Did you know that Jesus was condemned and put to death by religion (Jewish) and

government (Roman) coming together and conspiring together? John 18:31-35 Then said Pilate unto them, take ye Him, and judge Him _____ to your _____. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not _____ for us to put any man to _____: **32** That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. **33** Then Pilate entered into the _____ hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the _____ of the Jews? **34** Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did _____ tell it thee of me? **35** Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine _____ nation and the chief _____ have delivered thee unto _____. **NOTE: As can be seen in the above texts, the Jewish leaders could not legally put Jesus to death of their selves. This had to be ratified by Rome. So as religious leaders the only way they could accomplish this was to find some type of condemnation of Jesus that would find common ground with the Roman government to consent to His death. To do**

this they would use even false accusations or whatever -just so long as they could get Jesus put out of the way. Keep in mind that Jesus had the true pure religion. The Jewish religion at that time had greatly apostatized and become legalistic and perverted. So it will be in these last days. True pure Christianity will be in the small minority while the more popular religion will influence and coerce the state to enforce certain laws and decrees and thus propagate persecution. Bible prophecy in Revelation 13 has foretold this. And it will be in the name of "Christianity."

- 12.) What classic statement does Jesus make to the Roman governor in regards to the "separation of church and state"? **John 18:36** Jesus answered, My _____ is _____ of this _____: if my kingdom were of this _____, then would my servants _____, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but _____ is my kingdom _____ from hence. **NOTE: Earthly governments in this world of sin only serve the purpose of keeping law and order in an otherwise chaotic and evil world until Jesus sets up His kingdom of righteousness. God requires each prospective candidate that will make up the citizens of His kingdom to be born-again with a transformed heart that will be cleansed of selfishness and sin. In this way only, peace, love and happiness will reign with no more war, racism, hate, greed or anything that savors of evil!**
- 13.) What other statement did Jesus make that indicated that civil powers should operate separately from religion? **Matthew 22:21** They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, _____ therefore unto _____ the things which are Caesar's; and unto _____ the things that are God's. **NOTE: History over and over again shows us what happens when church and state unite. In practically every case there is awful persecution! One only has to look at the history of the dark ages during the time of Papal persecution against protestant Christians and in it was some of man's greatest inhumanity to man -all in the name of religion. Problem is, when will we learn from history? During this ugly time, millions of earnest and sincere Christians were put in loathsome dungeons, placed on the rack, burned at the stake as well as other unspeakable tortures all in the name of God. Don't think it can happen again?**
- 14.) What does the book of Revelation say will happen just before Jesus comes again? **Revelation 13:15** And he had _____ to give life unto the image of the _____, that the image of the beast should both speak, and _____ that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be _____. **16** And he causeth _____, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a _____ in their right hand, or in their foreheads: **17** And that no man might _____ or _____, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. **Revelation 20:4** And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of _____ that were _____ for the witness of _____, and for the _____ of God, and which had not _____ the beast, neither his _____, neither had received his mark upon their _____, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a

thousand years. NOTE: History does have a strange way of repeating itself. Large numbers of Christians nowadays believe they will be raptured away before the great tribulation and persecution. Where is this teaching to be found in the Bible? It simply isn't there! Already the masses are deceived just like the Bible says. The Bible plainly teaches that "all who live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." There is no hint anywhere in scripture that the final generation of Christians will escape persecution. It is only wishful thinking on the part of a weak, cushy, spineless generation to have an easy way out! All one has to do is look at all the present persecution going on now throughout the world by communist and Islamic governments to know that there is not going to be a privileged few who escape suffering for Jesus' sake!

15.) What incredible example do we have from Bible prophecy that warns us about church and state wedded together? **Revelation 17:3** *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a _____ sit upon a scarlet coloured _____, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 6 And I saw the _____ drunken with the _____ of the _____, and with the blood of the _____ of Jesus: and when I saw _____, I wondered with great admiration. Daniel 7:23* Thus he said, The fourth _____ shall be the fourth _____ upon earth, **Jeremiah 6:2** I have likened the daughter of _____ to a comely and delicate _____. **NOTE: Zion represents God's people or church. A beast (in Bible prophecy) represents a kingdom or government (state). Here in Rev. 17 John saw in vision a woman (church) riding on a beast (kingdom). When a person is riding on a horse or some other animal, who is controlling who? Which one is in charge? The scriptures are very clear that church or religion should never have control of government. Jesus Himself taught this! What is often the result when this happens? The answer is in verse 6 of Rev. 17. There is bloodshed! During the "dark ages" the Church of Rome tortured and put to death over 50 million [conservative estimate –probably much more] Christian dissenters. This is worse than Nazi Germany or probably even communist Joseph Stalin or other monstrous dictators!**

Brief Quiz

CIRCLE ONE

- 1.) **True/False** - It is important that religion controls the government so that it can be a positive influence on the government when it needs to legislate laws.
- 2.) **True/False** – God would have us be respectful of government because it punishes wrongdoers and keeps society from falling apart with chaos.
- 3.) **True/False** – Jesus taught that church & state should be kept separate.
- 4.) **True/False** – History has few if any examples of what happens when church & state combine together.
- 5.) **True/False** – Jesus was put to death by religion influencing the government.
- 6.) **True/False** – Christians should as far as possible be the best citizens of any given country.

- 7.) **True/False** – Christians should faithfully obey all the laws of the land even when they might be contrary to God’s laws.
- 8.) **True/False** – Bible prophecy gives little indication of the importance of keeping church & state separate.

My Response

I can see from God’s Word that it is important for church and state to keep separate so that there can be unbiased laws that won’t conflict with people’s consciences. I am thankful that because of this we don’t have to face much persecution now. When they do unite as prophecy says it will, I desire by God’s grace to obey God rather than man and be loyal to Him even when faced with death.

Signed _____