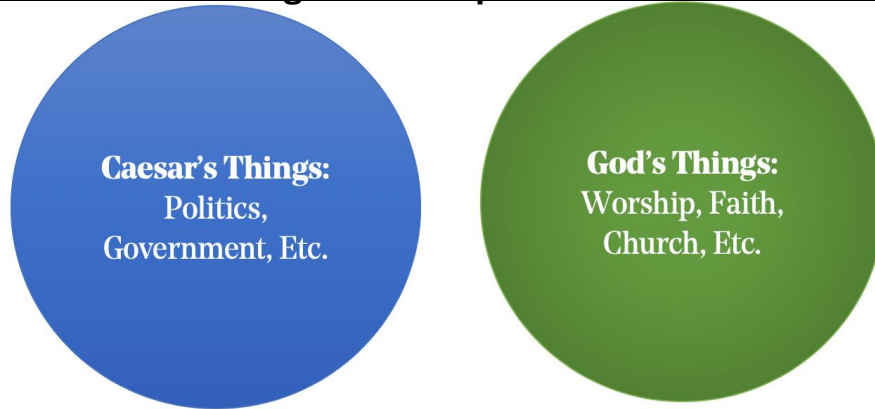


Got Questions: What should Christians think of Government?

An Improper Understanding of the “Separation of Church and State”¹



Matthew 22:15 – 22

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words.

16 And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances.

17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why put me to the test, you hypocrites?

19 Show me the coin for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius.

20 And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?”

21 They said, “Caesar's.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”

22 When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away.

A Proper Understanding of “The Things that are Caesar’s” and “The Things that are God’s”



¹ Images are from the 9Marks Journal by Lehman, John. 8/30/2016 “What Christians Should Do For Government: Love Your Nation, People, or Tribe”



Got Questions: What should Christians think of Government?

Where Did the Idea for Laws and Human Governments come from?

Genesis 9:5 - 7

5 And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

6 “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.

7 And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.

1. Behind the authority of human government is God’s requirement for *justice*.
 2. God’s justice is *proportional*.
 3. God made humans *in His own image* and therefore should be treated accordingly.
 4. God calls all of mankind accountable to this *stewardship* of authority.
- Laws and governments are good for society to enforce justice and foster human flourishing.
 - They are from God, under God, and accountable to God.

Is Every Government and Every Ruler Placed by God?

John 19:10 – 11a

10 So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?”

11a Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.”

1st Peter 2:13 – 17

13 Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme,

14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.

15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.

16 Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Under What Conditions Would It Be Right to Disobey Human Authorities?

Acts 4:18 – 20

18 So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge,”

Act 5:28b – 29

28b ...“We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.”

29 But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.”

- A Christian is to be a good citizen *until* being a good citizen means being a bad Christian.
 - If the government ever commands what God forbids, or forbids what God commands, then our plain Christian duty is to resist in order to obey God.

