

Got Questions: If the Government Legalizes Something, Is It No Longer Sinful?

Theme Verses: “We Ought to Obey God, Rather Than Men”

Deuteronomy 12:28 Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Isaiah 5:20 – 24

20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!

22 Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink,

23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of his right!

24 Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours the stubble, and as dry grass sinks down in the flame, so their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom go up like dust; for they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

Daniel 6:10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

- Human governments are an effective, albeit imperfect, tool to curb sin in a broken world.
 - Generally, governments enact laws to protect and promote human flourishing.
- For a long time, American churches had leaned too heavily on the shared overlap between the values of the state and the values of the church.
 - However, in many essential matters, the overlap between cultural values and Christian values is becoming increasingly thinner.
- The radical nature of what we are called to in Christ demands that,
 - the more things seem to change, the more we must stay the same.

To be a Christian is to be Radical - Hated by the World, Loved by Heaven

1st Peter 4:1 - 5

- Christianity lived well, does not live in alignment with cultural trends.
 - Just because something is legal before Caesar, it means nothing before God.
- Western culture and philosophy have largely trained us as Americans to focus on our personal rights and liberties – instead of our heavenly responsibilities and accountabilities.
 - There are many things that you legally as an American, have a right to do, that are deeply wrong, deeply immoral, and deeply sinful.

Who is responsible to teach our people, to train our children, and to judge what is sinful or not?

- The Bible calls pastors to teach God’s word and God’s laws to their flocks
 - The Bible calls parents to teach God’s word and God’s laws to their children
 - The Bible calls Christians to lead radical and countercultural lives;
 - honoring, praising, and glorifying God.



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Grateful For Government, But Realistic about Its Role

1st Timothy 2:1 – 4

1 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,

2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,

4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- The focus and the moral energy of Christians should not be primarily spent pursuing political, legal, and cultural support for the behaviors and attitudes we want to see in our homes and in our churches.
 - Rest assured, we need dedicated, godly men and women in governmental systems.
 - We should be grateful for them. We should pray for them. We should vote for them.
- But political efforts should never be the primary focus of pastors and parents.
 - If these cultural downward trends continue, American Christians will need to be more spirit-dependent and more Bible-saturated than ever—to show new converts and our young people values and principles that will encourage them to be gospel-shaped and to live joyfully out of step with the world.

**“The apostles did not set out to change the world.
They set out to proclaim the Christ who had changed them.”**

God Desires Total Transformation and Devotion to Him from our Hearts

Daniel 6:10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

- What are you going to do the day the next legal document is signed?
 - What will you do when the government passes another law against God’s laws?
- Will you respond radically, as Christians are called to do?
 - Even if that means you’ll be maligned for it?
 - Will you still keep your devotions before your God, just as you had done previously?

