

12 April 2015

**RPC Christian Education Series: Christ and Culture**

Week 10: Christ in the Public Sphere: Politics

**Intro and Review**

The political process is the way in which we interact with the institution (the government) that codifies our cultural norms. What are some of the political issues about which you think Christians should be concerned?

**I. Biblical Need for Government**

a. Read **1 Samuel 8: 7-20**. Read **Romans 13: 1-4**.

b. These passages may seem contradictory- but what do they both indicate about Man's condition and a need for government?

**II. The Christian's Involvement in the American System**

"Separation of Church and State" => 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...

a. **Falwellian:** The moral priorities of the government have changed such that it is the duty of Christians to become fully involved in the political process, advocating for explicit Christian values in policy.

*"The idea that religion and politics don't mix was invented by the Devil to keep Christians from running their own country." –Jerry Falwell*

b. **Anabaptist:** The Sermon on the Mount provides our governing principles and Christians should avoid any involvement in government and the political process. No state in the church, and no church in the state.

*“What is the relevance of the Church to the social conditions and the problems? Well I would say that it is the business of individual Christians to play their parts in society. The Church has had her greatest influence upon society when she has been most evangelical... [Knox, the Puritans, Whitefield, the Wesley’s] did more to improve social conditions in their countries than all the dabblings of ecclesiastics in politics.” - David Martyn Lloyd-Jones*

- c. Augustinian:** We must understand that law is rooted in a moral framework, and we can therefore pursue policies of social justice, environmental care, etc., without a direct connection to Christian doctrine.

*“No man can possibly be benevolent or religious, to the full extent of his obligations, without concerning himself, to a greater or less extent, with the affairs of human government.” - Charles Finney*

### **III. Levels of Government**

- a.** Read **Ephesians 5:15-16**
- b.** What does this passage tell us about time management?
- c.** At what level can we have the most influence? Federal, state, local?

*“Local policies influence state policies, and state policies influence federal policies. We have a long history in the US of states and municipalities leading the way on issues from child labor to legal abortion, to women's suffrage. State and local victories provide the foundation for political movements by giving hope and momentum.” - Daily Kos Editorial*