

# CIVIL GOVERNMENT & CHRISTIANS' ROLES

## Biblical Principles:

- 1) **God established nations** (Gen 10; Duet 32:8; Acts 17:26) **and civil government** (Rom 13:1). **The two primary purposes of civil government are: a) punish the wicked and b) encourage good behavior and protect the innocent** (Rom 13:2-7; I Tim 2:1-4; I Pet 2:13-14; I Tim 1:8-10).
- 2) **Christians should submit to government authorities** (Mt 22:21; Rom 13:1; I Pet 2:13), **as long as there is no conflict with God's law. If there is a conflict, we should obey God rather than men** (Acts 5:17-29; Dan 3:13-18, 28-29).
- 3) **Christians should exercise civil influence and get involved with government (i.e. politics). Our involvement should start with prayer!** The most important thing we can do is pray without ceasing (I Thes. 5:17). We should pray for: national repentance and revival (Nehemiah 9; II Chron. 7:14), our civil leaders (I Tim. 2:1-4), peace and prosperity (Jer 29:7), for the election of righteous over unrighteous people (Prov. 29:2), and for government to fulfill its primary roles of restraining evil and protecting the innocent (Rom 13:2-7; I Tim 2:1-4; I Pet 2:13-14; I Tim 1:8-10).
- 4) **Christians should also be directly involved. Christians should be involved because:**
  - a) "When the righteous are in authority, people rejoice; when the wicked are in authority people mourn" (Proverbs 29:2). "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).
  - b) Christians are to be "salt" and "light" (Mt 5:13-14).
  - c) We are to seek God's will on Earth as it is in Heaven (Mt 6:10).
  - d) We are to disciple the nations and teach them to observe all that God has commanded (Mt 28:19 -20).
- 5) **Christians should be biblical in how we participate in politics. We should:**
  - a) **Speak truth in love** (Ephesians 4:15) **and speak with grace** (Col 4:6)
  - b) **Avoid unwholesome talk and speak in ways that build people up, not tear down** (Eph 4:29)
  - c) **Not hinder the gospel message by insensitivity and expression of anger and hostility** (Col 4:2-6; Eph 4:31 – 5:2)