

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

As believers in the United States of America it is critical for us to recognize the need and obligation we have as God's representatives in this land to allow His divine viewpoint to be the basis for our political viewpoints on personal, social, and national matters. While this world cries out "Theology and politics should never mix!" the reality for the believer is that they must mix in order to be effective ambassadors for God through Christ.

Where does the idea of being God's representative in political affairs of government (and more) come from? It comes directly from God in 1 Peter 2:11.

"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against your soul."

The words "aliens" and "strangers" describe the reality that the believer in Christ is no longer a citizen of his physical birth country but he is residing in a country that is not his own.

1. "Alien" is translated from παροίκους ("pa-roi-kous") which describes them as, "those who are not living in their own country."

Believers in Christ are not living in their own country for their citizenship is in heaven according to Philippians 3:20-21:

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power He has even to subject all things to Himself."

2. "Strangers" is translated from παρεπιδήμους ("pa-re-pi-dae-mous") which describes believers as, "foreigners dwelling alongside citizens in order to do business for their government."

Believers in Christ are foreigners in whichever nation they dwell and their presence on earth is only for the purpose to do business for God.

The vast majority of the founding fathers of the United States of America understood these concepts well, believing them zealously. Prior to America's formal Declaration of Independence from Great Britain in 1776, those first pilgrims who had ventured across the Atlantic Ocean signed the Mayflower Compact in 1620. With their signatures placed upon the Mayflower Compact they forever cemented in history the reality of their purpose in coming to the New Land.

The Mayflower Compact reads,

"In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc.

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

Having undertaken, for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith and Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the First Colony in the Northern Parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together in a Civil Body Politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini 1620.”

Notice their purpose for having made the voyage:

“...for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian Faith...”

Likewise, when the signers of the Declaration of Independence signed the document that formally severed the authority of Great Britain’s King George III they did so with a clear purpose, writing,

“When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature’s God entitles them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...

...We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right out to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliance, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

55 of the 56 signers who pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor in pursuit of God-given rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness were protestants, while the lone remainder was a Roman Catholic (Charles Carroll of Maryland). Being vastly protestant the signers of the Declaration were

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

comprised of many different denominations, the largest quantity in these three denominations: Episcopal, Congregational, and Presbyterian.

The House Judiciary Committee of the 33rd Continental Congress (1854) in addressing complaint against establishing chaplains in the United States Military recognized that Christianity, regardless of denomination or sect, was sustained in some form by every colony during the revolution and founding of the United States of America.

“At the adoption of the constitution, we believe every State-certainly ten of the thirteen-provided regularly for the support of the church, as for the support of the government: one, Virginia, had a system of tithes. Down to the Revolution, every colony did sustain religion in some form. It was deemed peculiarly proper that the religion of liberty should be upheld by a free people. Had the people, during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged-not any one sect. Any attempt to disregard all religion would have been viewed with universal indignation. The object was not to substitute Judaism, or Mahomedanism, or infidelity, but to prevent rivalry among sects to the exclusion of others. The result of the change above named is, that now there is not a single State that, as a State, supports the gospel.”

The “change” referred to midway through and in the ultimate sentence of the quote referred to a change which took place between the 1st Continental Congress and the 33rd Continental congress. That change was a shift in the states from embracing the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the “religion of liberty.”

It took nearly 78 years for this change away from the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the nationally held religion, despite which sect or denomination one American subscribed to. 78 years prior, in 1776 the writings of the founding fathers, both officially and unofficially, were full of direct biblical quotations.

The University of Houston assembled 15,000 writers from the Founding Era and searched through the writings to determine the source of the Founder’s ideas. In a span of 10 years the political science researchers from University of Houston isolated 3,254 direct quotes made by the founders in their writings. The top three sources of those direct quotes are:

1. Baron Charles De Montesquieu, comprising the most direct quotes at 8.3%
2. Sir William Blackstone, comprising 7.9% of their quotes
3. John Locke, comprising 2.9% of the founders’ quotes

However, their research revealed that an astonishing 34% of their direct quotes were taken directly out of the Bible. That is an amount which is four times higher than both Montesquieu and Blackstone, and twelve times more often than Locke. Each of those three men’s writings significantly influenced by the Bible in their own writings and ideas. Montesquieu, for example, wrote in *The Spirit of the Laws*

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

“God is related to the universe, as Creator and Preserver; the laws by which He created all things are those by which He preserves them...The Christian religion, which orders men to love one another, no doubt wants the best political laws and the best civil laws for each people, because those laws are, after [religion], the greatest good that men can give and receive...I have always respected religion; the morality of the Gospel is the noblest gift ever bestowed by God on man. We shall see that we owe to the law of nations-benefits which human nature can never sufficiently acknowledge. The principles of Christianity, deeply engraved on the heart, would be infinitely more powerful than the false honor of monarchies, than the humane virtues of republics, or the servile fear of despotic states.”

To Blackstone’s credit, his *Commentaries on the Laws* (1768) were so steeped in biblical truth and intertwined with the gospel of Christ that they were the instrument used to bring about Charles Finney’s salvation. Charles Finney became one of America’s most well-known revivalists from the Second Great Awakening in the early 17th century. He accepted Christ as his Savior as a consequence to studying Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws* which “provided the biblical concepts on which those laws were based.”¹

In the early writings of the founders many components of the United States’ government are evident. For example, the three branches of government possessed as the framework for the American government being derived from Isaiah 33:22,

“For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; He will save us.”

1. Judge-Judicial Branch
2. Lawgiver-Legislative Branch
3. King-Executive Branch

Or, in another example the separation of powers between the branches was created because of the wickedness of man’s heart derived from Jeremiah 17:9,

“The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?”

To deal with man’s deceitful and wicked heart because of his sinful nature the founders created the separation of powers between the branches. Having come from a monarchy under the Crown of Great Britain they had personally been affected by the wickedness of man’s heart as King George III tyrannically ruled over them in order to reduce them to despotism.

Even in dealing with churches within the different states of America tax exemptions were derived based on the founding fathers’ understanding and affirmation of Ezra 7:24,

“We also inform you that it is not allowed to impose tax, tribute or toll on any of the priests, Levites, singers, doorkeepers, Nethinim, or servants of this house of God.”

¹ Barton, David. 1993. *America’s Godly Heritage*. Alledo, TX: Wallbuilder Press.

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

Furthermore, the Supreme Court of the United States of America understood so clearly and accurately the biblical heritage of the nation that in its *Church of the Holy Trinity v. U.S* 1892,

“No purpose of action against religion can be imputed to any legislation, state or national, because this is a religious people. This is historically true. From the discovery of this contentment to the present hour, there is a single voice making this affirmation.”

And in summarizing the evidence SCOTUS concluded in its ruling it cited 87 different precedents to support its conclusion that,

“These, and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation.”

The reality of America’s founding, founders, and citizenry recognizing the role of advancing the gospel of Christ is embedded, nay-fossilized-in every ounce of its original culture. The predominant majority of the founders of the United States of America recognized that they were ambassadors for God and His servants for liberty that can only come from the “religion of liberty,” namely, Christianity.

Lastly, the importance of Christians representing the truths of God’s Word and liberty of the gospel is paramount in order that the nation be blessed by God. Charles Finney, saved by reading commentary on the laws and their basis, declared,

“The church must take right ground in regards to politics...The time has come for Christians to vote for honest men, and take consistent ground in politics or the Lord will curse them...God cannot sustain this free and blessed country, which we love and pray for, unless the Church will take right ground. Politics are a part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to their country as a part of their duty to God...God will bless or curse this nation according to the course Christians take in politics.”

Yet Christians have grown silent, and even worse, not all those Christians who speak through the ballot proclaim in the selections for office the precepts, doctrines, and principles of God’s Word.

It is no wonder that the United States of America has fallen into the depraved political scene in which it currently toils. There is but one answer: Christians must become Christians in thought, conduct, and fruit by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit’s renovation of their thought into divine perspective. This begins, and ends, in the pulpits in America. Finney knew this as well, proclaiming to preachers in his day without mincing words,

“Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discrimination, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in religion, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics have become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it.”

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

The failure of the pulpit to teach the Word of God affects the congregants who sit in the church's pews each Sunday. The failure of the pulpit to teach the Word of God affects the thoughts, mentality, and heart of the nation by its impact upon the individual hearer in the pew.

The state of American Politics goes hand in hand with the state of Christianity within its populace. Thus, the issues discussed today such as Global Warming (Climate Change), Abortion, Social Justice, and Gun Control can all be traced back to a failure in the pulpits of America where preachers have failed to do their God-given duty to instruct those who attend in God's precepts, doctrines, and principles.

Instead, pastors today are more concerned about which tennis shoes or skinny jeans are more aesthetically pleasing for the "culture" of their congregation. Others have become self-glorifiers, expressing their own thoughts and opinions while attaching a single verse to their "message" in an attempt to spiritualize their selfishness (hand selected from the translation, paraphrase, or commentary, which best supports their opinions of course). Still others have opted to become story-tellers, reading God's very words and determining how to best dramatically represent what "hits them" the most.

The answer to America's political problem is not in Washington, D.C. No, the answer to America's political problem is in the pulpits of Christian churches who teach God's Word systematically and in detail, harmonizing its doctrines and maintaining their contexts.

To address this shortfall we now turn our attention to the four aforementioned topics to investigate them and identify God's perspective concerning them.

1. Global Warming (Climate Change)

Global Warming was a term previously utilized by the American left to describe their belief that humanity's presence and enterprise on earth was destroying the atmosphere resulting in the earth's temperature rising.

They feared that if, as they suggest, the earth's temperature rose that then the polar ice caps would melt and the ocean levels would rise swallowing up the coasts of continents. They further suggested that if the atmosphere was destroyed too greatly that then there would be no recovery and humanity would be wiped off of the face of the earth due to a host of floods, natural disasters, and weather phenomena.

The term "Global Warming" was quietly replaced in media and political speech by the term "Climate Change" because time after time the cries of Global Warmists were proven to be incorrect, much like false prophets whose self-derived prophecies were proven false. There are slightly different meanings behind the two terms, something which is quickly pointed out by their proponents and believers.

According to Nasa,

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

“Global warming is the long-term heating of Earth’s surface observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth’s atmosphere.”²

And in reference to “Climate Change” Nasa identifies,

“Climate change is a long-term change in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth’s local, regional and global climates. These changes have a broad range of observed effects that are synonymous with the term.”³

Thus, the driver of “Climate Change” is “Global Warming.” With increasing fervor and frequency politicians and citizens alike are noting abnormal snow storms, droughts, hurricanes and typhoons, and regional flooding as their evidence for a changing climate at the hands of man.

Their cries to “save the planet” are becoming more enshrined in the laws of the land. For example, in both Washington state and California, shoppers must provide their own reusable shopping bags, or else pay a fee to purchase “banned” plastic bags. All under the guise of saving the planet.

As Christians, God’s instructs us to be stewards of that which he gives us. Whether those resources be monetary, physical, or relational. Remember God put Adam in the garden of Eden “to cultivate it and keep it.”⁴

God’s purpose for Adam in the garden was that he labor to take care of what was needed in the garden and keep watch over it so that no harm come to it.

1. Cultivate (עָבַד – “ob-dae”): for the purpose of working the needs of something
2. Keep (שָׁמַר – “shom-rae”): for the purpose of keeping guard or watch over something

God instructed Adam in how to carry out these commands and provided for him all that he needed to do so, including a helper in the form of his woman, known after the fall as Eve.

Some have erroneously taken these two purposes for Adam’s placement in the garden as supports for man’s need to prevent the earth from decaying into destruction and, thus, save the planet.

However, to do so falsely espouses the idea that man is the one who holds the planet together and not God. This is contrary to Scripture where in Colossians 1:16-17 Jesus Christ is described as the One who holds all things He has created together.

“For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-all things have been

² <https://climate.nasa.gov/global-warming-vs-climate-change/>

³ Same as ²

⁴ Gen. 2:15

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”

It is Jesus Christ who holds all things together, not man. No actions of man can overwhelm the omnipotence and omniscience of God, destroying this planet before God’s intended purpose for it is completed. Recognize also from Colossians 1:16-17 that all things were “created through Him and for Him.” This world was not created for man’s purposes and needs, but for God’s. God created a world that could house the life He wanted it to house, but it is not man’s world, it is God’s.

Furthermore, God is going to destroy this planet on His timing, and no one will be able to destroy it prior to His will. Look at 2 Peter 3:7,

“But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”

God is going to destroy this present heaven and earth in order to replace it with a new heaven and a new earth according to Revelation 21:1.

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.”

So, God,

1. Hold the present world together in Christ for His purposes.
2. Is reserving the present world for judgment yet to come.
3. Will judge the present world at the right time following the Millennial Reign of Christ.

Then why would those in the world want to make sure that the world not gets destroyed? Because they are sons of disobedience who have been deceived into Satan’s attempt to preserve the world for the kingdom he is attempting to establish over God’s.

God can create the new heavens and the new earth using a single statement out of nothing. But Satan cannot create things out of nothing, he must have something with which he can mold and craft in order to create what he wants.

Believers are to learn how to be good stewards of the world, but need not fear that man will destroy this world. God is holding it together in the manner and for the duration of time that He wills.

Satan & Company on the other hand, require there be something left to build with should they succeed in overthrowing God. Something, again, believers need not fear.

2. Abortion

The topic of abortion is far more involved than is necessary, largely due to the depravity of man’s wicked heart. Abortion is the practice of stopping the human body’s growth in the

The Bible & American Politics
Dr. Todd Bounds

womb, and in some cases currently, even a few weeks after that body has left the womb and sustained itself in independent breathing from his mother's body.

The cries of abortionists ring out "my body, my choice!" But in doing so they directly reveal the source of anyone's desire to abort life within them: arrogant selfishness. The body they are killing is not their own, it is someone else's body within them. It is a biological life that is, according to David, containing a sinful nature from the moment of conception in Psalm 51:5.

"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me."

David's statement reveals the reality of Romans 5:12 that the sin of man is biologically passed down through the seed of man when it meets with the egg of the woman. Biological life is life and the unjust taking of life is prohibited in Scripture, namely in Exodus 20:13.

"You shall not murder."

It is astonishing that even believers have such a difficult time with this, in reality, non-issue. Yet, man has always found excuse for justifying his sinful actions and empathizing with loved ones who have engaged in sin.

It is important that the believer recognize the different types of life referred to in Scripture when dealing with the issue and proponents of abortion:

1. Biological life: A living body is one whose cells are functioning. Biological life begins at conception.
2. Soul Life: A living soul is one whose soul has animated life within a body. This occurs at first breath.
3. Physical life: Physical life is the result of biological and soul life separate from the mother in which they were developed. This occurs at first breath.
4. Spiritual life: A living spirit is one whose spirit is operational as a result of regeneration. Spirit life begins in the moment of faith in Christ for salvation.

Regardless of the type of "life" in view, unjustly taking the life of another is prohibited in Scripture, regardless of the circumstances that surround its development (such as rape, incest, teen pregnancy, etc.). While circumstances can be trying, emotionally overwhelming, and exceedingly and seemingly insurmountably difficult, God's grace is sufficient for all who depend upon it. Paul reveals such in 2 Corinthians 12:9,

"And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me."

The believer who agrees with abortion holds no biblical basis to do so and lacks the basic level of spiritual maturity that would produce in them an orientation to God's grace for all situations regardless of their difficulty or desirability.

3. Social Justice

Social Justice is a popularized term that has become increasingly vocalized over the last 120-130 years. It is the idea that all humans have different advantages and disadvantages than other humans and, therefore, require deferential treatment or preferential treatment in order to offset the difference between the advantaged and disadvantaged. It has five pillars:

1. Access to resources- Giving everyone the same access to the same amount of resources.
2. Equity-giving tools to those who do not have the tools to succeed that others do.
3. Participation- giving everyone a voice to verbalize their opinions and concerns about policy.
4. Diversity-giving preference to diverse ages, sexes, genders, ethnicities in order to represent everyone equally.
5. Human Rights-giving accountability for violations of human rights of the minority.

The reality of social justice is best understood in terms of Robin Hood who “robbed from the rich to give to the poor.” It is a means by which those who have “advantage” are stripped of their advantages, regardless of their origination, in order to bring about equity with those who are “disadvantaged.”

The inherent problem with social justice is that it completely removes the divine establishment of personal responsibility from the “disadvantaged” viewing them as victims of those who have more resources and opportunity because of the sphere into which they were born.

When God created man He gave man free will resulting in man being accountable to God for what he does in spite of the circumstances into which he is born (or in Adam’s case, created). This is no better exhibited than in Genesis 3 when God deals with each of those involved in man’s fall, Adam, the woman, and the serpent-Satan, holding them each accountable for their own choices.

1. God judges Adam for hearkening to the voice of his wife (Gen. 3:17-19).
2. God judges the woman for her eating the fruit in spite of her having been deceived (Gen.3 16).
3. God judges the serpent for his deception of the woman (Gen. 3:14-15).

God knows no victims when man’s unrighteous decisions produce negative consequences. This is true of households and generations, something which Social Justice ignores completely.

Social Justice declares that there is an institutionalized and systemic oppression of those who they deem to be disadvantaged. However, they fail to recognize the reason for the poor position of many is the unrighteous decisions of those who have come before them which created the disadvantageous circumstances.

Conversely, Social Justice fails to recognize the righteous, or, in the least, shrewd, decisions of those who came before the ones they deem “advantaged” in their circumstances.

The Bible & American Politics

Dr. Todd Bounds

God's word instructs in the way we ought to live and there are positive and negative consequences to those decisions we make which can impact generation after generation behind us.

As believers we are to be compassionate toward those in need but also to equip them through first the gospel of Christ, and second instruction in God's Word to live out a gracious life.