

# Thought Piece: Separation of Church and State – Should the Church be involved in politics?

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## Article Brief

What role, if any, should the Church play in politics and government? As our culture continues to shift towards a decidedly, anti-Biblical worldview – especially on issues involving human sexuality and the Biblical family – Christians are rightly asking, “What role should we play in holding up a moral standard for our community?”

Since the Supreme Court’s 1947 ruling, separatists in the United States have touted a “wall of separation of Church and state” as reason to take prayer out of public schools and the Ten Commandments off courtroom walls. As recently as April 2022, the US Supreme Court heard the case of *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*. Coach Kennedy was fired for praying on the field after football games.

The fight for the influence of our culture is intense. So-called “woke” individuals, leaders, and corporations – like Disney and Netflix – are pushing a liberal, anti-Biblical worldview. School boards are opening the door to LGBTQ advocates, often circumventing parental influence. Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, who was confirmed to the U.S. Supreme Court this month, was nominated by President Biden in large part because she is a “Black woman;”<sup>i</sup> yet, during her confirmation hearings she could not “define what a ‘woman’ is” flatly stating, “I’m not a biologist.”<sup>ii</sup>

Everywhere we look, humanity is doing what it has always done when left to its own devices – raising our “truth” over God’s Truth, our will over God’s will. And, just like the Genesis story of Creation, the result will be death. The Church is on the earth to raise a moral standard based on Biblical Truth, thereby illuminating a better path. The choice is not one of simply “right or wrong” but of “life or death, abundance or destruction.”

*<sup>18</sup> Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.”<sup>iii</sup>*

The Great Commission makes the call on the Church clear: make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to faithfully follow Jesus’ commandments. It is love that motivates us to uphold a moral standard. We are not here to judge, but we are under a direct command to point people to the Truth for only by entering through the “narrow gate” will humanity find the abundant life Christ died for.

*13 “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. 14 But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.”<sup>iv</sup>*

As Christians, our call is to help humanity find the Way to eternal life using our influence in all areas of life including the political and governmental sectors. Our freedom to practice our religion is a fundamental right that comes with responsibilities.

The founding fathers of our nation carefully constructed the US Constitution and Bill of Rights. Building off the foundation of the Declaration of Independence, they formed a government with specific protections for the free exercise of religion. They looked to scripture <sup>v</sup> in their desire to form a “more perfect Union” free from governmental influence over the practice of religion. <sup>vi</sup>

The Bible itself is a book about government. From the creation story to Jesus’ acknowledgment of the Church as a “legislative assembly,” scripture points to Christians using their influence in all areas of society from entertainment to education to government. The prayer is for God’s “kingdom to come and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Yet as Christians exercise their rights as citizens of both their country and the Kingdom of Heaven, secular separatists and progressive Christians alike <sup>vii</sup> are crying foul insisting the traditional Church get back into its corner.

It is critical for Christians to gain an understanding of the spiritual and cultural dynamics at play. The consequences of ignorance and inaction will negatively affect their children, local schools, communities, and ultimately, the culture.

*16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

*17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>viii</sup>*

Jesus came to save the world, to show the world the Father’s love, and demonstrate the way to live so that every individual might experience the joy of everlasting life. The Church is his chosen tool. There is no plan-B.

## ***Founding Fathers’ Intent***

The United States of America is a unique experiment of government the likes of which never existed. Our constitution was ratified on June 21, 1788, and it has guided our country for 234 years. It has been amended only twenty-seven times. The first ten amendments, the Bill of Rights, were ratified in 1791. The latest amendment was ratified May 1992. <sup>ix</sup>

For a country to be governed by the same document for over 230 years is remarkable! To put this into context, of the 193 member states to the United Nations, only 13 governments are currently operating on a constitution ratified more than 100 years ago. Only two nations – Norway and Netherlands – join the United States with over two centuries of continuous government coming in at 208 and 209 years respectively. <sup>x</sup> France’s current constitution is only 64 years old, and they have had 14 different constitutions since 1789. <sup>xi</sup>

What we have is precious, unique, and it has made the United States the most prosperous nation in the world. The US leads the world producing some 24% of the nominal, world-wide gross domestic product (“GDP”). <sup>xii</sup> This is more than Japan, Germany, India, United Kingdom, France, and Brazil combined. The United States also leads the world in charitable giving. In 2016, US citizens personally contributed 1.44% of the national GDP to non-profit organizations. New Zealanders, who come in second, contributed 0.79% of their GDP – 45% less. <sup>xiii</sup>

I share the success of the United States not because of arrogance or some misguided sense of national superiority. Rather, I’m suggesting the favor we as a nation have enjoyed is derived specifically from our form of government and, more importantly, the foundation of it as proven out for over 200 years.

When the Continental Congress ratified the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, they laid out the foundation of our constitution: <sup>xiv</sup>

*“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...”* <sup>xv</sup>

The founders noted “self-evident” truths meaning they deemed them obvious. All of humanity is created equal *by* God and given *from* God specific rights. The “unalienability” of these divine rights means they cannot be given or taken away by man. Among them they highlighted the right to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. The latter of which is encompassed in the idea of the “American Dream” – anyone who is willing to work can succeed, make a living, own a home, and pass along an inheritance to their children.

To protect these divine rights, government is instituted. This point is vitally important: Our founding fathers, from the beginning, saw the fundamental purpose of government to be the protection of our God-given rights. They held that the relationship between humanity and our Creator is sacred, central, and paramount to the success of both the individual and of the nation. The Revolutionary War was fought to secure the opportunity to pursue these freedoms, and the US Constitution was written to secure them.

The first amendment to the constitution made the issue crystal clear: “*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...*”<sup>xvi</sup> This amendment has two clauses.

First is the establishment clause. Government shall not make any laws regarding the “establishment of religion.” Essentially, this clause prevents government from creating or endorsing its own federal religion and prevents government from interfering with individual churches establishing their own doctrines and practices of religion. Religion is between humanity and God and superior to the purview of government.

Second is the exercise clause. Government shall not make any laws regarding the “free exercise” of religion. This could be called the “right of conscience” meaning every individual is free to practice their religious beliefs without fear of government intervention.

The exercise clause plays out daily in the lives of Americans, as employers well understand. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission provides guidance to employers on issues of potential religious discrimination stating:

*“These protections [for employees under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964] apply whether the [employees] religious beliefs or practices in question are common or non-traditional, and regardless of whether they are recognized by any organized religion. The test under Title VII’s definition of religion is whether the beliefs are, in the individual’s ‘own scheme of things,’ religious.”*<sup>xvii</sup>

Note it is the individual’s own beliefs – their individual conscience – that sets the standard for claiming a religious exemption from their employer. Under the exercise clause, every individual has the right to practice their religious beliefs in accordance with their conscience, and government has no role in moderating the relationship between humanity and God.

Thomas Jefferson, in his January 1, 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptist Association clearly demonstrates these principles perfectly. The Baptists were the minority religion in Connecticut and were concerned the government would stop them from expressing their freedom of religion. They wrote to Jefferson asking for his perspective. Jefferson, who was President of the United States at the time, responded:

*“Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between Church & State. Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation in behalf of*

*the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights, convinced he has no natural right in opposition to his social duties.” xviii*

According to Jefferson, the first amendment to the constitution built a “wall of separation between Church and State” to prevent government from interfering with the Church (establishment clause) and giving every American the “rights of conscience” (exercise clause). To the founding fathers, the constitution created a clear separation of Church and state specifically to keep government out of the practice of religion. They never intended for the practice of religion to be taken out of government. The concept of keeping religion separate from government would not be introduced until 150 years later.

In 1947, the Supreme Court took up the case of *Everson v. Board of Education*. New Jersey passed a law granting local school districts permission to bus students to both public and private schools. As most of the private schools were Catholic, Everson sued on the grounds that the use of public funds to support religion violated the establishment clause of the US Constitution.

The court sided against Everson concluding that as the New Jersey law served all religions it did not violate the establishment clause. However, in his majority opinion, Justice Hugo L. Black quoted Jefferson’s 1802 letter referencing the wall separating Church and state adding that the “*wall must remain high and impregnable.*” xix “*This discussion had a decidedly separationist tone and has been cited by liberals as authoritative ever since.*” xx

For the first time in American history, “separation of church and state” was now applied to the Church, not to the state. Secular separationists jumped on this distinction and got to work removing prayer from public schools <sup>xxi</sup>, banning the words “God” or “Jesus” from graduation addresses, taking the Ten Commandments out of court rooms, and removing Bibles from public buildings. In the United States, the cultural war against religion – and particularly against Christianity – had begun.

### *The Biblical Pattern*

Speaking of Jesus, the prophet Isaiah says, “*For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The **government** will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*” <sup>xxii</sup>

Humanity was created to govern – to rule and reign. The creation story found in Genesis 1 sets the initial pattern for Biblical governance:

*<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will **reign** over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”*

*27 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

*28 Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and **govern** it. **Reign** over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”<sup>xxiii</sup>*

The Old Testament is full of political and governmental interactions with God’s people. In Genesis 4, Cain founded the city of Enoch. In Genesis 14, Abram is blessed by the King-Priest Melchizedek. Starting in Genesis 37, we see the story of Joseph who was sold into slavery by his brothers and ultimately became the second highest ranking official in Egypt under Pharaoh. In fact, it was his position in government that allowed him to save his family, and ultimately, the Hebrew people.

In Exodus 2, Moses is raised in Pharaoh’s court where, no doubt, he was taught governance – a skill he used later in life to lead his people. In Numbers 12, Miriam and Aaron challenge Moses’ authority to govern and were severely rebuked by God. Exodus 18 shares how Moses implemented management into the governance structure over the people as they traveled in the wilderness. Throughout Exodus 20-34, God provides the people and Moses with detailed laws and explicit instructions on the structure of their government. Joshua, in Joshua 1, takes over as the governmental leader.

The Biblical books of Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles, are exclusively about the political and governmental issues surrounding the Israelites. David, the man after God’s own heart,<sup>xxiv</sup> was King of Israel. Many of his Psalms relate specifically to his rule asking for God’s protection and provision for himself and his people.

Jumping to the New Testament, Matthew 2 shows Herod’s interest in Jesus as “King of the Jews,” and his attempt to murder Jesus as a child. Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5-7 had many references specific to Roman interactions including turning the other cheek, walking the extra mile, and giving your cloak. John the Baptist publicly stood up to Herod for issues of morality in Luke 3. Jesus teaches on paying taxes in Matthew 17 & 22.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 13 instructs us to, “*submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.*”<sup>xxv</sup> In Acts 25, Paul exerts his rights as a Roman citizen and “appeals to Caesar” effectively transferring his case from the Jewish, religious court to the official Roman court system.

Nowhere in scripture do we find any suggestion that Christians should not be involved with politics and government. In fact, the opposite is true. The Bible is filled with stories of Godly men and women using their influence to lead and to govern. It is precisely what we were created to do.

## *Jesus & the Ekklesia*

Revelation 1, speaking of Jesus, says, “Now to the one who constantly loves us and has loosed us from our sins by his own blood,<sup>6</sup> and to the one who has made us to **rule** as a **kingly priesthood** to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and dominion throughout the eternity of eternities! Amen!”<sup>xxvi</sup> As followers of Christ, we are both kings and priests. We are called to rule and reign on the earth and reconcile humanity back to God. We have a governmental and a spiritual calling – both of which are to be used to serve God and advance his Kingdom.

The combined kingly priesthood function is, interestingly, a uniquely New Testament ideal. The Old Testament pattern was for the offices of government and priesthood to be separated. Moses and Aaron and Saul and Samuel are examples. Melchizedek in Genesis 14 is the rare exception, and speaking of Jesus the author of Hebrews in chapter 7 declares:

*“<sup>19</sup> This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. It leads us through the curtain into God’s inner sanctuary. <sup>20</sup> Jesus has already gone in there for us. He has become our eternal High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. This Melchizedek was **king** of the city of Salem and also a **priest** of God Most High.”*<sup>xxvii</sup>

Through Christ, we are called to be both kings *and* priests – to lead and to minister. Jesus drove this point home with his disciples in Matthew 16:

*“<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’*

*<sup>14</sup> ‘Well,’ they replied, ‘some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.’*

*<sup>15</sup> Then he asked them, ‘But who do you say I am?’*

*<sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’*

*<sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, ‘You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. <sup>18</sup> Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my **church**, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. <sup>19</sup> And I will give you the **keys** of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.’”*<sup>xxviii</sup>

Jesus declared that upon the confession of him being the Messiah, he would build his Church. The word for “church” here is “ekklēsia” in the Greek, and its use here is fascinating! Ekklesia was a common, civic term representing “*the called people, or those called out or assembled in the public affairs of a free state, the body of free citizens called together by a herald.*”<sup>xxix</sup> Ekklesia represented the “legislative assembly”

of a city or region. It could also represent those called together to further the affairs of a community (for example, a local Chamber of Commerce).

Jesus did not use the more common word “synagogue” (or “sunagōgḗ” in Greek) meaning “a [Jewish religious] gathering.”<sup>xxx</sup> He was building something different! His plan was to create an institution that *affected* culture not *retreating* from it. This is clear in the following verse. The “keys of the Kingdom of Heaven” are given to the ekklesia to forbid and permit on the earth bringing alignment with God’s will in heaven.

The “forbidding and permitting” functions of the ekklesia are the practical outworking’s of the Lord’s Prayer: “<sup>9b</sup> *Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. <sup>10</sup> May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*”<sup>xxxii</sup> While this charge is not limited to involvement in government and politics it clearly encompasses it.

## *Christian Nationalism*

The United States founders drew heavily from their Christian values and Biblical worldview in the creation of our government, and as we have discussed, this aligns with both the Biblical pattern and Jesus’ specific instructions for his followers. However, some progressive Christian leaders denounce what they call “Christian Nationalism.”

Paul Miller, speaking against Christian Nationalism writes, “*Normal Christian political engagement is humble, loving, and sacrificial; it rejects the idea that Christians are entitled to primacy of place in the public square or that Christians have a presumptive right to continue their historical predominance in American culture.*”<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Earlier this year, NPR published an article on the subject stating, “*The rise of Christian nationalism is both a symptom and an accelerant of the polarization that afflicts America. And there is more and more pushback. Beginning last year, more than 24,000 national church leaders, clergy and lay people have signed a statement that condemns Christian nationalism as a distortion of the faith.*”<sup>xxxiv</sup>

The statement NPR referenced was drafted by Christians Against Christian Nationalism,<sup>xxxv</sup> and at first glance seems quite reasonable. Clearly Christians have a moral and Biblical obligation to act with love and grace to all. Acts of violence, such as the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 capital riot, rightly should be condemned. As Christians we have an obligation to act in accordance with the fruit of the Spirit.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Further, holding any political party or public official in too high of a regard is wrong and can lead to the sin of idolatry. Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and we are called to advance God’s kingdom, not ours.

But if we dig a little deeper, we find something else. One of the tenants of the Christians Against Christian Nationalism statement reads, “*Conflating religious authority with political authority is idolatrous and often leads to oppression of minority and other marginalized groups as well as the spiritual impoverishment of religion.*”<sup>xxxvii</sup>

This statement presents two key problems. The first sets the premise for the second: “*Conflating (combining) religious authority with political authority is idolatrous...*” How so? If this is true, then Abraham, Moses, the prophet Samuel, King David, King Solomon, Isaiah, John the Baptist, the Apostle Paul, and Jesus were caught up in the “idolatry of politics.” By this definition, raising a Biblical standard for morality by using our influence as citizens to elect government officials, get legislation passed, peacefully protest when we disagree, and use our individual and collective voice to highlight cultural moral deficits is considered sin.

To get the full meaning of the statement, we need to look at its object: Political idolatry “*leads to the oppression of minority and other marginalized groups...*” What groups? Without doubt, issues of racism and discrimination, when found, must be addressed. Scripture is clear on this issue. As a nation we’ve made tremendous progress, but we do have more work to do. As Dr. Martin Luther King demonstrated, the Church should play a central role in addressing issues of discrimination using our voice and influence in every sphere, including government.

To understand what is being said, we need to dig deeper into who the Christians Against Christian Nationalism mean when they say, “*other marginalized groups.*” A quick look at the ideology of the pastors and leaders listed as endorsers to their statement <sup>xxxviii</sup> can give us some insight:

- The Rev. Dr. Paul Baxley, Executive Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is listed first. Prior to becoming Executive Coordinator, Dr Baxley worked on the denomination’s Illumination Project the conclusion of which was to recommend shifting their hiring practices from *excluding* to *including* members of the LGBT community. <sup>xxxix</sup>
- The second endorser is Sister Simone Campbell, Executive Director, Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice. Her endorsement is ironic as the organization she leads is specifically geared toward influencing government specifically supporting socialistic and far left policies including elimination of borders, abolition of the senate filibuster, and strong support for President Biden’s “build back better” plan. <sup>xl</sup>
- Next on the list are Tony Campolo and Shane Claiborne, Founders of the Red Letter Christian Movement. The movement seeks to follow the “words of Christ in the Gospels” to the exclusion of the rest of Scripture. Their extensive LGBTQ+ blog section on their website clearly demonstrates their position and agenda. <sup>xli</sup>
- The Most Rev. Michael B Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, the Episcopal Church is next. The Episcopal Church has been very vocal in supporting LGBTQ+ policies including performing same sex marriages and appointing homosexual individuals to ministry positions. <sup>xlii</sup>

- Paula Dempsey, Director of Partner Relations, Alliance of Baptists is next on the statement. Her denomination's website states, "*We are male and female laity and clergy, people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, theological beliefs, and ministry practices.*"<sup>xliii</sup>

While the list of endorsers goes on, the pattern is clear: Any Christian leader who (1) believes that the Bible is clear on issues of human sexuality, (2) that marriage is exclusively between a man and a woman, and (3) uses their voice to oppose the homosexual agenda can be labeled a "Christian Nationalist" and should be silenced. The hypocrisy demonstrated by this organization and those who agree with it is of a scale difficult to comprehend.

I greatly appreciate Pastor Erwin Lutzer's perspective articulated in his recent book, We Will Not Be Silenced:

*"Let me be clear that I am opposed to a form of judgmental Christianity that holds to truth without compassion and righteousness without humility. I am opposed to a form of Christianity that judges without listening and sees the faults of others without seeing our own...Our churches should be sanctuaries for the downtrodden, the oppressed, and the lonely. They should be hospitals for the soul.*

*But I see much of contemporary Christianity submitting to the culture in many areas of life, especially in matters of sexuality. The only way to make Christianity appealing, we are told, is to move the markers – to be more inclusive, more affirming. I fear we are allowing culture to inform our thinking and even raise our children."*<sup>xliv</sup>

Jesus was clear on issues of sin. He accepted us all, right where we were. "*But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*"<sup>xlv</sup> Yet, he does not allow us to stay there! He empowers us to move forward saying to the woman caught in adultery, "*Go and sin no more.*"<sup>xlvi</sup> As Christians with a Biblical worldview, our charge is clear. We follow Christ's example of loving and accepting people without accepting their sin, for if we allow them to accept their sin, we are withholding from them the freedom Christ died for.

Further, it is imperative we use our influence in every aspect of our culture including the political and governmental sectors, to raise the Biblical and moral standard for living – not because it is "right" but because it is the only way to the abundant life. We raise the standard not because of judgementalism, but because of real love. We deeply care and want the best for everyone, and we firmly believe God, as our Creator, is the one who determines what is best for us. If history has any lesson for us, it is that humanity, left to define its own truth, ends in disappointment, destruction, and death.

## Conclusions

Our constitutional rights – our right to establish and practice our religion – are being attacked today like never before. It is critically important that the Church actively engage in all areas of culture including the political and governmental arenas. Our founding fathers intended for our divine, inalienable rights to remain free, and they created a new form of government to ensure they remain so. Having Godly men and women serving in government – those honoring a Biblical worldview – is critical to preserving our religious freedom.

We have large segments of our population who have little or no belief in God. Further, many confess to believe; however, do not live by a fundamental, Biblical worldview. These individuals see our rights as coming from government, not from God. In effect, they view rights as alienable – transferable from one entity to another. Their drive is to eliminate rights that are “from God” and replacing them with rights “from the government.” Any freedom we get *from* the government can be controlled *by* the government. This is exactly what our founding fathers fought against!

Today, the Church, the ekklesia, is called to rise. As “kings,” we must stand for the freedoms bought and paid for by the blood, sweat and tears of the generations that have gone before us – the right to be governed by God and a Biblical worldview. Second as “priests,” we must help the nation find God, for only when a people submit to Him will they truly find “*a rich and satisfying life.*”<sup>xlvii</sup>

The dream of a country where every individual can find Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness can be fulfilled when the government instituted by humanity is defending the unalienable rights its citizens received from the Creator, and the citizens are growing in their relationship with the Creator. It is in this space the Church finds its call.

## End Notes

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<sup>i</sup> Kaslovsky, Jaclyn & Stone, Andrew; February, 15, 2022; The Washington Post; “Biden vowed to nominate a Black woman to the Supreme Court. It might be good politics.”; Accessed April 28, 2022; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/02/15/biden-supreme-court-nominee-black/>

<sup>ii</sup> Boyd, Jordan; March 23, 2022; [The Federalist](https://thefederalist.com); “Judge Nominated To Supreme Court On The Basis Of Her Sex Can’t Define ‘Woman’”; Accessed April 26, 2022; <https://thefederalist.com/2022/03/23/judge-nominated-to-supreme-court-on-the-basis-of-her-sex-cant-define-woman/>

<sup>iii</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Mt 28:18–20). Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>iv</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Mt 7:13–14). Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>v</sup> See WallBuilders, “A Few Declarations of Founding Fathers and Early Statesmen on Jesus, Christianity, and the Bible”; <https://wallbuilders.com/founding-fathers-jesus-christianity-bible/>

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vi For an interesting collection of documents about religion and the Revolutionary War, see the Library of Congress collection titled “Religion and the Founding of the American Republic”;  
<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel03.html>

vii For an overview of Progressive Christianity, check out the Progressive Christianity website found at  
<https://progressivechristianity.org/the-8-points/>.

viii Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Jn 3:16–17). Tyndale House Publishers.

ix The twenty-seventh amendment limited congressional pay raises from going into effect until after an election giving the populace the opportunity to vote them out of office before the raises take effect. Interestingly, this amendment was proposed in September 1789 – 202 years before it took effect!

x Wikipedia; “List of National Constitutions”; Accessed April 21, 2022;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_national\\_constitutions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_national_constitutions)

xi European Commission; “Eurydice: France, Historical Perspective”; Accessed April 21, 2022;  
[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/france/historical-development\\_en#:~:text=Since%201789%20and%20the%20French,promulgated%20on%204%20October%201958.](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/france/historical-development_en#:~:text=Since%201789%20and%20the%20French,promulgated%20on%204%20October%201958.)

xii Worldmeters; “GDP by Country 2017”; Accessed April 21, 2022;  
<https://www.worldometers.info/gdp/gdp-by-country/>

xiii Charities Aid Foundation (CAF); “Gross Domestic Philanthropy: An international analysis of GDP, tax and giving”; Accessed April 21 2022, <https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-policy-and-campaigns/gross-domestic-philanthropy-feb-2016.pdf>

xiv I am indebted to David Barton, founder of WallBuilders (<https://wallbuilders.com/>) for his many books, videos, and classes. Much of this paper and much of my understanding of these issues has come from his insights. In particular to this subject, I encourage you to watch this YouTube video <https://youtu.be/O7mIU34etOk> titled “David Barton - Separation of Church and State (Full) - Make Straight the Pathway 2013”.

xv National Archives; “Declaration of Independence: A Transcription”; Accessed April 21, 2022;  
[https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript?\\_ga=2.21836978.861531016.1650552507-1190237265.1650552507](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript?_ga=2.21836978.861531016.1650552507-1190237265.1650552507)

xvi National Archives; “The U.S. Bill of Rights: A Transcription”; Accessed April 21, 2022;  
[https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript?\\_ga=2.8246331.861531016.1650552507-1190237265.1650552507](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript?_ga=2.8246331.861531016.1650552507-1190237265.1650552507)

xvii U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission; “Guidance: Section 12: Religious Discrimination”; Accessed April 21, 2022; <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/section-12-religious-discrimination>

xviii Bill of Rights Institute; “Letters between Thomas Jefferson and the Danbury Baptists (1802)”; Accessed April 21, 2022; <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/primary-sources/danburybaptists>

xix Ward, Artemus; Middle Tennessee University; “The First Amendment Encyclopedia: Everson v. Board of Education (1947)”; Accessed April 21, 2022; <https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/435/everson-v-board-of-education>

xx Ibid

xxi Interestingly, the Supreme Court is currently processing the case of *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* where Coach Kennedy was fired for gathering with his players mid-field to pray after football games. At issue is the “exercise clause” rights of public employees to practice their religion. For more information, check out this April 21, 2022 Washington Post article, “*Supreme Court takes up case of a coach and his prayers on 50-yard line*” by Robert Barnes.

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<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/04/21/supreme-court-praying-football-coach/?variant=15bc93f5a1ccbb65>

xxii Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Is 9:6). Tyndale House Publishers. (emphasis added)

xxiii Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Ge 1:26–28). Tyndale House Publishers.

xxiv Acts 13:22

xxv Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Ro 13:1). Tyndale House Publishers.

xxvi *The Passion Translation: New Testament* (B. Simmons, trans.; Re 1:5–6). (2017). BroadStreet Publishing.

xxvii Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Heb 6:19-20,7:1). Tyndale House Publishers.

xxviii Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Mt 16:13–19). Tyndale House Publishers. (emphasis added)

xxix Zodhiates, S. (2000). In *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

xxx Zodhiates, S. (2000). In *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

xxxi Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Mt 6:9–10). Tyndale House Publishers.

xxxii The scope of the believer’s “rule and reign” is limited to their specific circle of influence. We are all called to be king-priest in every area of our lives – our churches, schools, workplaces, communities, and the structures that affect them including government, media, the arts, and local economies. We are called to be “salt and light” everywhere we go, and we are called to go everywhere.

xxxiii Miller, Paul D; Christianity Today; February 3, 2021; “What Is Christian Nationalism?”; Accessed April 27, 2022; <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2021/february-web-only/what-is-christian-nationalism.html>

xxxiv Burnett, John; January 23, 2022; NPR; “Christian nationalism is still thriving — and is a force for returning Trump to power”; Accessed April 27, 2022; <https://www.npr.org/2022/01/14/1073215412/christian-nationalism-donald-trump>

xxxv Christians Against Christian Nationalism; Accessed April 27, 2022; <https://www.christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org/statement>

xxxvi See Galatians 5:16-26

xxxvii Christians Against Christian Nationalism; Accessed April 27, 2022; <https://www.christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org/statement>

xxxviii <https://www.christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org/endorsers>

xxxix Rev. Dr. Paul Baxley is currently the Executive Coordinator (EC) of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Prior to his appointment as EC, “Baxley also provided leadership as member of the ad-hoc committee of the Illumination Project, an 18-month effort to seek ways to model unity through cooperation on matters of human sexuality in the Fellowship.” (<https://wordandway.org/2019/01/16/baxley-unanimously-selected-to-lead-cbf/>) This project was an evaluation of employment practices in the organization the conclusion of which was to recommend, “the absolute prohibition [to employ Christians]”<sup>13</sup>

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*who are LGBT] will be lifted and now there will be more openness for some positions...*  
(<http://illuminationproject.net/report/> pp17)

<sup>xi</sup> Sister Simone Campbell is Executive Director of Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice – an organization that actively lobbies congress for “left leaning” political policies including the elimination of the senate filibuster, open boarders, support for “build back better.” (<https://networklobby.org/news/>)

<sup>xii</sup> Tony Campolo and Shane Claiborne are founders of The Red Letter Christian Movement which seeks to focus on the words of Christ in the scriptures. The “Red Letter Christian Pledge means, *“I will seek first the Kingdom of God ... where ... peacemakers are the children of God, working towards a society where all are treated equally and resources shared equitably.”* (<https://www.redletterchristians.org/pledge/>)  
Based upon their extensive LGBTQ+ blog section, this includes a clear acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle. (<https://www.redletterchristians.org/category/lgbtq/>)

<sup>xiii</sup> Rev. Michael B Curry is the Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church which has openly embraced homosexuality stating, *“With an estimated 2.3 million members, the Episcopal Church is open and welcoming of the LGBTQ community. Unlike the Worldwide Anglican Communion, of which it is a part, the Episcopal Church does not condemn homosexuality.”* (<https://www.hrc.org/resources/stances-of-faiths-on-lgbt-issues-episcopal-church>)

<sup>xiii</sup> Paula Dempsey, Director of Partner Relations, Alliance of Baptists. Their website reads, *“Theological Home. Pursuit of God’s Justice. Partnership in Mission. These three core values guide the Alliance of Baptists. The Alliance of Baptists began in 1987 as a prophetic voice in Baptist life. Today, we have grown to be a justice movement and community of faith. We are male and female laity and clergy, people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, theological beliefs, and ministry practices. We are about 4,500 individual members and roughly 140 congregations knit together by love for one another and God, combining progressive inquiry, contemplative prayer and prophetic action to bring about justice and healing in a changing world.”* (<https://allianceofbaptists.org/who-we-are>)

<sup>xiv</sup> Lutzer, Erwin; *We Will Not Be Silenced*; Harvest House Publishers; (2020); pp 15

<sup>xiv</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Ro 5:8). Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>xvi</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Jn 8:11). Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>xlvii</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Jn 10:10). Tyndale House Publishers.