

A series of eight posts that addresses the topics of **Jesus or Caesar, the Folly of Trusting in Earthly Kings, Christian Nationalism, the Woke Right , Dominionism, the Christian Right Versus the Christian Left and Vice Versa, Circumventing God's Will and Passive Disengagement Versus Active Participation.** These posts may be found online at the following link under item #9: <https://bcooper.ca/differing-opinions/>

## **Jesus and Caesar – Revisited and Updated**



Just about everywhere you look these days, there are articles and posts galore about the coming Presidential election, authored by Christians from

all walks of life. I mentioned before that I would not be writing any additional posts on the pros or cons of which candidate to vote for, or which political party best represents the hopes and aspirations of our Christian faith and I intend to adhere to that commitment.

What I do find noteworthy however and have selected for the topic of this post, is that Jesus lived during the time that the Romans occupied and controlled the Holy Lands. Under Julius Caesar, Judaism was officially recognized as a legal religion, a policy followed by the first Roman emperor, Augustus. The ruling Hasmonean dynasty was deposed by the Romans after the Roman Senate declared Herod the Great "King of the Jews" in 40 BCE, the Roman province of Egypt was established in 30 BCE, and Judea proper, Samaria and Idumea (biblical Edom) became the Roman province of Iudaea in 6 BCE.

To infer that the Romans were brutal in exercising their imposed authority on these Biblical regions would be an understatement. We know that they extracted a crushing tribute from the innocent people whom they enslaved.

**Yet there remains a striking oddity.** Jesus never had anything condemning to say about the Romans. In fact, the only recorded statement where Jesus mentions Caesar is quite famous and it reads as follows:

**Matthew 22:20-21 NASB:**

"And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."

This is the same Jesus who had lots to say about the Pharisees, Sadducees, Chief Priests and Scribes and the Jews in general. This is the same Jesus who cleared the Temple of the money changers and sellers of sacrificial animals and birds. This is the same Jesus who said of the Jews in **John 8:44 NASB** "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

Yet where is the condemnation for the occupying Roman authorities?

**There isn't any.** Does it ever cross our minds as to why this is? It's obviously not because Jesus was not aware of their occupation and authority. Jesus makes that abundantly clear when He responds to Pontius

Pilate (the fifth governor of the Roman province of Judaea) in **John 18:36-37 NASB:**

“Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”  
Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

I would like you to focus on exactly what Jesus said. **“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”**

**“If my kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting** so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; **but as it is,** My kingdom is not of this realm.”

Maybe if the Church at large had taken this to heart, maybe if we followed [the Great Commission](#) that Jesus gave us and that God-given task was our primary focus, maybe we as the collective visible Christian Church, would not be in the situation that we find ourselves in today. **But we haven't done that have we?**

And for some reason we seem to think that if we can gain power and authority over this worldly kingdom that we live in, then we will be able to impose our Christian moral will on those, whose hearts and minds **have yet to be changed**. And to add insult to injury, we throw stones at those within the Church, the body of Christ, who we think have walked away from following God's will, **as we perceive it to be**. And what is that perceived will of God that so many pursue? Gaining political power and authority to enact legislation and laws which adhere to our moralistic Christian thinking. The only problem with that perception of God's will is that **Legislation and Laws do not change people's hearts and minds**.

The whole point of the Mosaic Law was that we could not, in and of ourselves, perfectly follow God's will but we totally abandon that reality and

think somehow if we can only impose these laws on everyone, then we will be getting in line with God's will. **If that didn't happen for the Jews, why would it be different for the Gentiles?** I think that it matters little whether one is Liberal or Conservative because many on both sides have long abandoned following the principles of God's Holiness and will. **Being holy means never to justify unholy objectives or behaviour and being unholy means never to justify holy objectives or behaviour.** Take a good hard look at the hatred and dissent that supposedly is representative of God's mercy and justice, which is so prevalent today, and tell me that we are being faithful [Ambassadors for Christ](#).

Consider **Romans 3:8-12 NASB:**

"And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just. What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one."

The reason Jesus never had anything negative to say about the worldly kingdom that ruled all of Judaea was that the worldly kingdom of Rome was NOT His kingdom.

Then what specifically did Jesus command us to do, you might ask?

Consider **Matthew 28:16-20 NASB:**

"But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated to them. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Also consider **John 16:29-33** NASB:

"His disciples said, "See, now You are speaking plainly and are not using any figure of speech. Now we know that You know all things, and that You have no need for anyone to question You; this is why we believe that You came forth from God. Jesus replied to them, "Do you now believe? Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; **I have overcome the world.**" Emphasis is mine.

**Jesus** has already overcome the world, He did NOT ask us to take that on. His mandate was to make disciples, baptize new believers and teach all that He commanded, thus enlarging **His** Kingdom. **The difference is indeed significant.**

**So whose kingdom are we fighting for, ours or His?**

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## The Folly of Trusting in Earthly Kings



**1 Samuel 12:12 NASB:** "But when you saw that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon was coming against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us!' Yet the Lord your God was your king." Emphasis is mine.

Anyone who is a supporter of [Christian Nationalism](#), [Dominionism](#) as taught by [the New Apostolic Reformation movement](#) or [Regionalism](#) may not appreciate this post. I understand this from the outset. I apologize for the length of this post, but it is essential to consider all the integral parts collectively. I appreciate your understanding and patience.

The folly of trusting in human political systems to make the world a better place rather than trusting in God as our King is evident throughout the Bible, especially in God's dealings with the nation of Israel. Below is a brief overview of this theme, supported by Scripture references.

### **THE IMPERFECTION OF HUMAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

#### **Human Wisdom is Limited**

**Jeremiah 17:5:** "Thus says the Lord, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in

mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord.”

**Isaiah 55:8-9:** “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.’”

### **Human Rulers Often Act Unjustly**

**Psalms 146:3:** “Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.”

**Ecclesiastes 8:9:** “All this I have seen and applied my mind to every deed that has been done under the sun wherein a man has exercised authority over another man to his hurt.”

### **The Futility of Human Plans Without God**

**Proverbs 16:9:** “The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”

**Psalms 127:1:** “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain.”

### **Israel’s Decision to Have a Human King**

**1 Samuel 8:6-7:** “But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, ‘Give us a king to judge us.’ And Samuel prayed to the Lord. The Lord said to Samuel, ‘Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.’”

**1 Samuel 8:19-20:** “Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, ‘No, but there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.’”

**1 Samuel 12:12-13:** “When you saw that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon came against you, you said to me, ‘No, but a king shall reign over us,’ although the Lord your God was your king. Now therefore, here is the

king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for, and behold, the Lord has set a king over you.”

In these passages, God expresses His displeasure with Israel’s desire for a human king, indicating that their request was a rejection of His kingship. Despite this, God allowed them to have a king, highlighting the imperfection and eventual failure of human political systems.

### **Observation**

The decision of the Israelites to choose a human king over God reflects the broader folly of trusting in human political systems. Human wisdom and authority are limited and often unjust, leading to failure and disappointment. In contrast, God’s wisdom, justice, and plans are perfect and eternal. By placing our trust in God and His divine order, we align ourselves with His superior ways, which lead to true justice, peace, and righteousness.

## **THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN PREPARING FOR GOD’S KINGDOM**

### **Proclaiming the Gospel**

**Matthew 24:14:** “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

**Matthew 28:19-20:** “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

### **Living as Ambassadors of Christ**

**2 Corinthians 5:20:** “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

**1 Peter 2:9:** “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

### **Demonstrating God’s Love and Justice**

**Micah 6:8:** “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the

Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

**James 1:27:** "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

### **Observation**

Trusting in human political systems to make the world a better place is fundamentally flawed due to the limitations and imperfections of human wisdom and justice. In contrast, trusting in God as our King and working towards the arrival of His Kingdom is the path that leads to true justice, peace, and righteousness. The Church's role is to proclaim the Gospel, live as Christ's ambassadors, and demonstrate God's love and justice, thereby preparing the world for the ultimate fulfillment of God's perfect Kingdom.

### **THE GREAT COMMISSION**

The Great Commission given by Jesus **emphasizes the priority of spiritual transformation and the establishment of God's Kingdom in our hearts over any human political system.** By focusing on making disciples and spreading the Gospel, Christians acknowledge the limitations of earthly governments and the supreme authority of God. Here's how the Great Commission intersects with the folly of trusting in human political systems:

#### **The Great Commission**

**Matthew 28:18-20:** "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

**Mark 16:15:** "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.'"

#### **Focus on Spiritual Transformation Over Political Reform**

The Great Commission directs Christians to prioritize spiritual matters—making disciples and teaching God's commandments—over political

agendas. **This underscores the belief that true and lasting change comes from the transformation of hearts by the Holy Spirit, not through human legislation.**

**Romans 12:2: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."**

### **Acknowledgment of Christ's Supreme Authority**

Jesus begins the Great Commission by asserting His authority over heaven and earth. This highlights that all earthly powers and political systems are subordinate to Him. Trusting in human systems over Christ's authority is therefore misguided.

**Colossians 1:16-17:** "For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

### **The Kingdom of God vs. Earthly Kingdoms**

The Great Commission is a call to expand the Kingdom of God, which operates on principles vastly different from those of earthly kingdoms. While human political systems often focus on power and control, God's Kingdom is built on love, justice, and humility.

**John 18:36:** "Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.'"

### **Dependence on God's Power, Not Human Strength**

The task of fulfilling the Great Commission relies on the power of the Holy Spirit, not human wisdom or political maneuvering. This reliance on divine strength further highlights the folly of placing trust in human political systems to accomplish what only God can do.

**Acts 1:8:** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

## **Observation**

The Great Commission given by Jesus commands Christians to prioritize the spread of the Gospel and the making of disciples over any allegiance to human political systems. This mission reveals the limitations of human efforts and underscores the supremacy and sufficiency of God's Kingdom. Trusting in human political systems to bring about lasting change is futile when compared to the transformative power of the Gospel and the authority of Christ. By obeying the Great Commission, Christians affirm their trust in God's superior ways and His ultimate plan for humanity.

## **JESUS REJECTED THE WORLDLY KINGDOMS**

Jesus rejected Satan's temptation to have all the kingdoms of the world made subject to Him, demonstrating a model of service, humility, and obedience to God's will. This example shows us how to usher in the Kingdom of God through serving others, humility, sacrificial love, and spreading the Gospel. Here is a brief overview of the model of service and example that Jesus gave us, supported by Scripture references.

### **Jesus' Rejection of Worldly Power**

**Matthew 4:8-10:** "Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Go, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

### **Jesus' Model of Service and Humility**

#### **Serving Others**

**Mark 10:45:** "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

**John 13:14-15:** "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you."

#### **Humility**

**Philippians 2:5-8:** "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being

found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

**Matthew 11:29:** "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

### **Jesus' Example of Sacrificial Love Ultimate Sacrifice**

**John 15:13:** "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

**1 John 3:16:** "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

### **Obedience to God's Will**

**John 6:38:** "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

**Matthew 26:39:** "And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.'"

### **Jesus' Call to Follow His Example Denial of Self**

**Matthew 16:24-25:** "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.'"

### **Loving One Another**

**John 13:34-35:** "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

**1 John 4:7-8:** "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

## **Spreading the Gospel and Building the Kingdom The Great Commission**

**Matthew 28:18-20:** "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

**Acts 1:8:** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

## **Living as Examples of Christ**

**Ephesians 5:1-2:** "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

**1 Peter 2:21:** "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps."

## **Observation**

Jesus' rejection of Satan's offer of worldly power highlights the importance of serving God over seeking earthly dominion. His life exemplified service, humility, sacrificial love, and obedience to God's will. By following Jesus' example, Christians are called to serve others, spread the Gospel, and live in a manner that reflects the values of God's Kingdom. This approach underscores the futility of trusting in human political systems and the need to rely on God's superior ways and thoughts to truly usher in the Kingdom of God.

## **SUMMARY**

Trusting in earthly kings and political systems is fundamentally at odds with the divine model provided by God. Humanistic means to control and protect mankind are inherently flawed due to the sinfulness and limitations of human nature. In contrast, God's chosen one, Jesus Christ, provides a perfect example of leadership through humility, service, and sacrificial love. Only through Him can true transformation and protection from the evils of man be achieved **by changing the hearts of those who follow Him.**

## **The Limitations of Earthly Kings and Political Systems Inherent Flaws in Human Nature**

**Jeremiah 17:9:** "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?"

**Romans 3:23:** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

## **Ineffectiveness of Human Wisdom**

**Proverbs 14:12:** "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

**Isaiah 55:8-9:** "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.'"

## **Temporal and Fragile Nature of Earthly Kingdoms**

**Psalms 146:3-4:** "Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

**Daniel 2:44:** "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever."

## **The Superiority of God's Chosen One**

### **Jesus as the Perfect Leader**

**Isaiah 9:6-7:** "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace."

**Colossians 1:17-18:** "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything."

## **Transforming Hearts and Lives**

**Ezekiel 36:26-27:** "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new

spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”

**2 Corinthians 5:17:** “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

### **Christ’s Eternal and Just Kingdom**

**Revelation 11:15:** “Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.’”

**Psalms 9:7-8:** “But the Lord abides forever; He has established His throne for judgment, and He will judge the world in righteousness; He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity.”

### **Conclusion**

Trusting in earthly kings and political systems is at odds with the divine order established by God. Human efforts to control and protect mankind are limited and often fail due to the inherent sinfulness and imperfections of humanity. Only God’s chosen one, Jesus Christ, can achieve true and lasting transformation by changing the hearts of those who follow Him. His Kingdom, characterized by righteousness, justice, and eternal peace, surpasses all human systems and offers the only true solution to the evils of man. By placing our trust in Him and following His example, we align ourselves with God’s superior ways and eternal purposes.

As I have stated [elsewhere](#), I am **NOT** advocating avoidance of political participation but when our focus on political participation becomes our priority and what we accomplish becomes the primary means whereby “all these things will be provided to you” ([Matthew 6:30-33](#)), then we have committed that 180-degree transition that God has again and again warned us about. I do believe that political participation can produce good but not without compromise because undeniably, political participation is compromise and one would have to be extremely naive to expect otherwise.

The Church has often made the critical error of rendering unto Caesar what should be rendered unto Jesus, thereby replacing Jesus with Caesar. This is

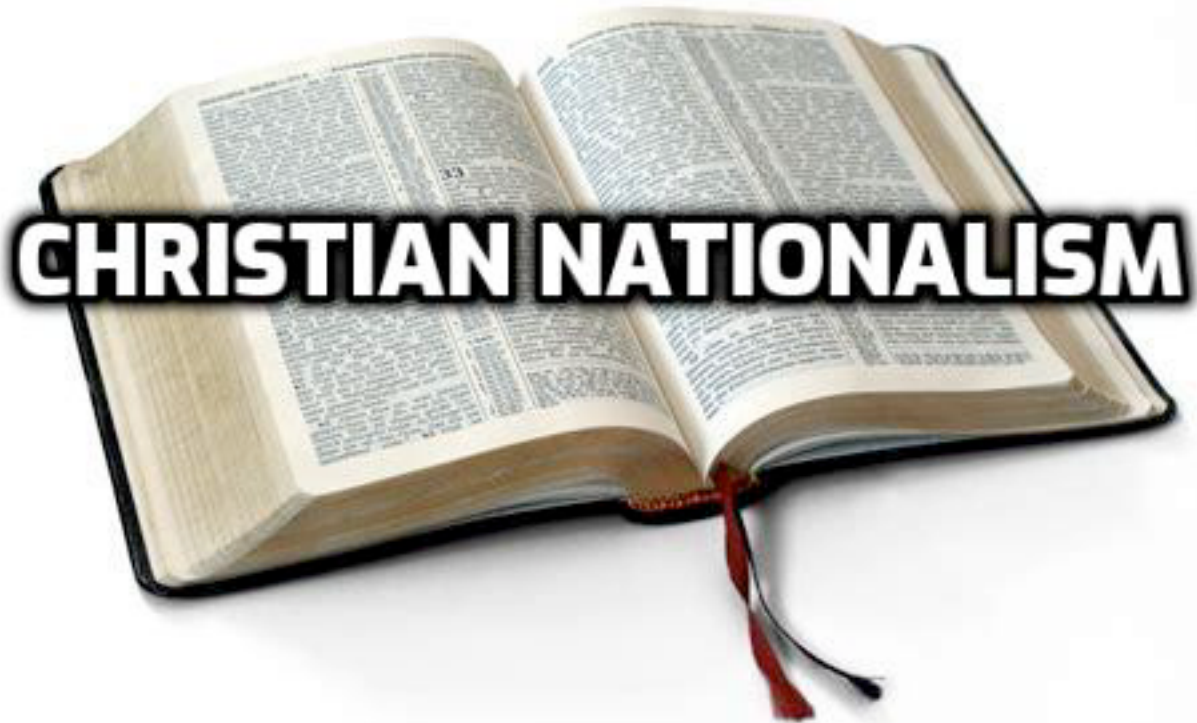
not a coincidence, as Jesus emphasized the difference between good intentions and truly following God's will in **Matthew 7:22-24**: "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; leave Me, **you who practice lawlessness.**'" (Emphasis added). If our efforts, whether through evangelical outreach or political pursuits, become focused on our achievements via political laws and our power instead of God's laws and His power, we place ourselves on His throne.

### **Final Scripture Reference**

**Proverbs 3:5-6**: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## The Whole Counsel of God's Holy Word Versus Christian Nationalism



More than ever, our culture seems to be mounting a comprehensive challenge against Christianity. The widespread rejection of truth and the resulting decline in moral values are eroding the Christian principles that once underpinned our North American nations. In this chaotic and often antagonistic environment, Christians face tough questions about their beliefs, and many are struggling to maintain their faith.

This particular post **is the first of three posts** where we will be looking at the following cultural Christian related topics and how they align with the whole counsel of God's Holy Word:

1. **Christian Nationalism;**
2. The Woke Right; and
3. Dominionism.

**Christian Nationalism** is a political and cultural ideology that combines aspects of Christianity with nationalism. It emphasizes the belief that the United States (or any nation) is fundamentally a Christian nation and should be governed by Christian principles. Proponents of Christian Nationalism often advocate for policies that reflect Christian values and moral teachings, and they may argue that their nation's history and identity are inherently tied to Christianity.

### **Key Characteristics of Christian Nationalism:**

1. **Historical Claims:** Christian Nationalists often assert that their nation was founded on Christian principles and that these principles should guide its governance.
2. **Moral Framework:** They emphasize the importance of Christian moral teachings in shaping laws and policies, particularly on issues like abortion, marriage, and religious freedom.
3. **Patriotism:** There is a strong sense of patriotism and a belief that the nation has a special, divine purpose.
4. **Cultural Identity:** The ideology often intertwines national identity with Christian identity, suggesting that being a good citizen is inherently tied to being a good Christian.

### **Analysis of Christian Nationalism in Light of the Whole Counsel of God's Holy Word**

To evaluate Christian Nationalism from a biblical perspective, we need to consider several key scriptural principles:

#### **1. The Kingdom of God vs. Earthly Nations**

Jesus taught that His kingdom is not of this world (**John 18:36**). While believers are called to be salt and light in the world (**Matthew 5:13-16**), their ultimate allegiance is to God's kingdom. **Philippians 3:20** states, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." This suggests that the identity and mission of believers transcend national boundaries and political affiliations.

#### **2. Separation of Church and State**

While the Bible does not explicitly teach the modern concept of the separation of church and state, it does provide examples of the distinction between religious and civil authority. For instance, in **1 Samuel 13:8-14**, King Saul's unauthorized offering of a burnt offering resulted in God's

rejection of his kingship, demonstrating the importance of distinct roles. Moreover, Jesus' statement in **Matthew 22:21**, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's," emphasizes the differentiation between civic duties and religious devotion.

### **3. Love for Neighbor and the Great Commission**

The Great Commandment calls Christians to love their neighbors as themselves (**Matthew 22:39**), and the Great Commission commands believers to make disciples of all nations (**Matthew 28:19-20**). These teachings focus on living out Christ's love and spreading the gospel, rather than imposing religious beliefs through political power. Coercing Christian morals or beliefs on others may conflict with the voluntary nature of faith, which is a matter of personal conviction and the work of the Holy Spirit (**John 16:8**).

### **4. Justice and Righteousness**

The Bible calls for justice and righteousness, which should inform a believer's engagement with society and politics (**Micah 6:8; Amos 5:24**). However, these principles should be applied with humility and a recognition of the fallen nature of all human institutions (**Romans 3:23**). The emphasis is on serving others and advocating for the oppressed, rather than seeking dominance or control.

## **Arguments Proponents of Christian Nationalism Use and Responses Based on the Whole Counsel of God's Holy Word**

### **1. Argument: The United States (or any other nation) was founded as a Christian nation and should remain true to its Christian roots.**

**Response:** While it's true that many of the founding fathers of the United States were influenced by Christian principles, the Bible does not prescribe a specific form of government or endorse the idea of a "Christian nation." Jesus taught that His kingdom is not of this world (**John 18:36**), and believers are called to be ambassadors of Christ, focusing on their heavenly citizenship (**Philippians 3:20**). The early church thrived and spread under various forms of government, including the Roman Empire, without seeking to establish a theocracy.

## **2. Argument: Implementing Christian values in national laws will lead to a more moral and just society.**

**Response:** While the Bible upholds the value of righteousness and justice (**Micah 6:8**), it also emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in transforming hearts (**John 16:8**). True morality cannot be legislated; it must come from a transformed heart through faith in Christ. **Romans 8:3-4** states, "For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." Therefore, while Christians should advocate for just laws, the ultimate solution to moral issues lies in the gospel, not in political power.

## **3. Argument: The Bible mandates that nations must follow God's laws to receive His blessings.**

**Response:** The Old Testament includes covenants with Israel that promised blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (**Deuteronomy 28**). However, these covenants were specific to Israel as a theocratic nation under God's direct rule. In the New Testament, the focus shifts to the church, which is called to spread the gospel to all nations (**Matthew 28:19-20**) and make disciples, not to establish a theocratic state. The blessings of God are now understood to be spiritual and eternal rather than tied to a specific nation (**Ephesians 1:3**).

## **4. Argument: Christians are called to take dominion over all areas of life, including politics, to bring about God's kingdom on earth.**

**Response:** While **Genesis 1:28** commands humanity to "fill the earth, and subdue it," this mandate is about stewardship over creation, not political dominion. Jesus' teachings emphasize service, humility, and self-sacrifice (**Matthew 20:25-28**). The idea of bringing about God's kingdom on earth through political power is not consistent with the New Testament's focus on the spiritual nature of God's kingdom (**Luke 17:20-21**). Christians are called to be salt and light (**Matthew 5:13-16**), influencing the world through love, good works, and the proclamation of the gospel, not through political coercion.

## **5. Argument: A Christian government will protect religious freedom and the right to practice one's faith openly.**

**Response:** While religious freedom is important and worth defending, the Bible does not teach that faith should be protected by political means. Jesus and the apostles lived under Roman rule, which was often hostile to Christianity, yet they focused on preaching the gospel and making disciples, even in the face of persecution (**Acts 5:29; 2 Timothy 3:12**). Jesus taught that His followers would face persecution (**John 15:18-20**), and Paul wrote that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces (**Ephesians 6:12**). The mission of the church is not to seek protection through political means, but to remain faithful in witness, regardless of the political climate.

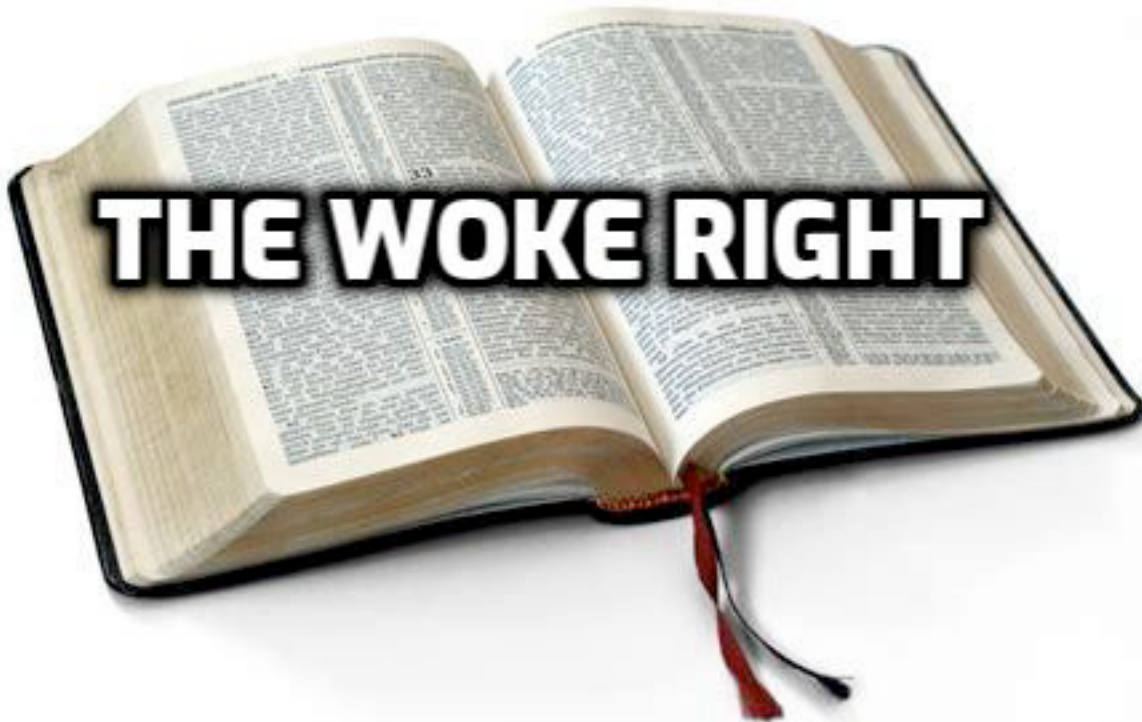
### **Conclusion**

While Christian Nationalism seeks to uphold Christian values within the nation, it can potentially conflict with biblical teachings if it prioritizes national identity over spiritual identity, conflates political power with the advancement of God's kingdom, or seeks to impose faith through legislation rather than evangelism. The whole counsel of God's Word calls believers to prioritize their heavenly citizenship, live out the love and teachings of Christ, and engage with society in a manner that honors God and respects the freedom of others. As believers navigate their role in their nation's political and cultural landscape, they must do so with discernment, humility, and a focus on the gospel's transformative power.

**Stay tuned for the next post in this eight post series that will look at the Woke Right and how it is associated with Christian Nationalism.**

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## The Woke Right Versus the Whole Counsel of God's Holy Word



**More than ever, our culture seems to be mounting a comprehensive challenge against Christianity. The widespread rejection of truth and the resulting decline in moral values are eroding the Christian principles that once underpinned our North American nations. In this chaotic and often antagonistic environment, Christians face tough questions about their beliefs, and many are struggling to maintain their faith.**

This particular post **is the second of three posts** where we will be looking at the following cultural Christian-related topics and how they align with the whole counsel of God's Holy Word:

1. Christian Nationalism;
2. **The Woke Right;** and
3. Dominionism.

The term “**Woke Right**” is relatively new and less commonly defined than “Woke Left.” Generally, “woke” refers to being aware of social injustices, particularly concerning race, gender, and inequality. The “Woke Left” often aligns with progressive views, emphasizing issues like social justice, equity, and systemic racism. However, the “Woke Right” represents a conservative or right-wing perspective that has adopted certain aspects of the “woke” ideology, particularly regarding identity and cultural issues, but with a distinctly conservative or nationalist twist.

### **Key Characteristics of the Woke Right:**

1. **Focus on Cultural Identity:** The Woke Right emphasizes cultural and national identity, often advocating for the preservation of traditional values and norms. This can include a strong emphasis on patriotism, religious identity, and conservative social values.
2. **Opposition to Progressive Ideologies:** While adopting some language and concepts from the broader “woke” movement, the Woke Right often positions itself against progressive ideologies such as Critical Race Theory, gender ideology, and the perceived erosion of traditional family values.
3. **Use of Identity Politics:** The Woke Right may use identity politics to highlight issues faced by specific groups, such as conservative Christians or traditional families, arguing that these groups are marginalized or threatened by progressive policies and cultural changes.
4. **Advocacy for Conservative Policies:** This group generally supports conservative policies, including strict immigration controls, traditional family structures, and religious freedoms. They may frame these issues in terms of protecting national and cultural identity.

### **Correlation with Christian Nationalism**

The Woke Right shares several key themes with Christian Nationalism, particularly in its emphasis on cultural identity and the preservation of traditional values. Here are some specific correlations:

1. **Emphasis on National and Religious Identity:** Both the Woke Right and Christian Nationalism emphasize the importance of national identity and the idea that the nation should uphold certain cultural and religious values. Christian Nationalists often argue that the United States (or another nation) has a Christian foundation that

should be preserved, while the Woke Right may stress the importance of maintaining traditional cultural norms. This can include a belief that the nation has a special role or destiny, often framed in religious terms.

2. **Opposition to Progressive Ideologies:** Both movements tend to oppose progressive ideologies, especially those perceived as threats to traditional values or religious beliefs. This includes opposition to issues like same-sex marriage, abortion, and gender identity policies. Both groups argue that these ideologies are detrimental to the moral fabric of the nation.
3. **Use of Identity Politics:** The Woke Right and Christian Nationalism both utilize identity politics but from a conservative perspective. They may emphasize the rights and grievances of conservative Christians, traditional families, or other groups they see as marginalized by progressive policies. This can include advocating for religious freedoms and the protection of Christian symbols and holidays.
4. **Advocacy for Policies Reflecting Christian Values:** Both groups advocate for policies that align with their interpretation of Christian values. This can include support for laws that restrict abortion, protect religious freedoms, and uphold traditional family structures. They argue that such policies are necessary for the moral and spiritual health of the nation.

### **Scriptural Analysis**

To evaluate these positions, it is essential to consider them in light of the Bible's teachings:

1. **National and Religious Identity:** The Bible teaches that believers' primary identity is in Christ, transcending national or cultural identity. **Philippians 3:20** says, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." This suggests that while Christians may engage in their cultural and national contexts, their ultimate allegiance is to God's kingdom.
2. **Opposition to Progressive Ideologies:** The Bible upholds certain moral teachings, but the New Testament emphasizes love, grace, and truth in engaging with others. Jesus calls His followers to be salt and light (**Matthew 5:13-16**), influencing the world with Christ-like character. While Christians are called to stand for biblical truth, they

are also called to love their neighbors, including those who disagree with them (**Matthew 22:39**).

3. **Identity Politics and Division:** The Bible warns against divisions within the body of Christ and calls for unity (**1 Corinthians 1:10**). **Galatians 3:28** states, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." While identity politics can raise awareness of specific issues, it can also lead to division and a focus on earthly identities over spiritual unity in Christ.
4. **Advocacy for Christian Values:** While advocating for values consistent with biblical teachings is important, the Bible also emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in changing hearts (**John 16:8**). The New Testament does not call for imposing Christian beliefs through political means but rather through personal transformation and the spread of the gospel (**Romans 12:1-2**).

The arguments that oppose Christian Nationalism are largely applicable to the Woke Right, particularly when evaluating both movements through a biblical lens. Here's a brief analysis of how these arguments correlate with Woke Right thinking:

### **1. Primary Allegiance to God's Kingdom vs. National Identity**

**Argument Against Christian Nationalism:** Christian Nationalism often conflates national identity with spiritual identity, suggesting that loyalty to one's nation is equivalent to loyalty to God's kingdom. This perspective can lead to the belief that the nation has a divine mandate or destiny.

**Application to the Woke Right:** The Woke Right, like Christian Nationalism, can also place a strong emphasis on national or cultural identity. This may include the preservation of traditional values and norms that they associate with the nation's identity. However, the Bible teaches that a Christian's primary allegiance is to God's kingdom. **Philippians 3:20** states, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Both movements can risk overemphasizing earthly national identity at the expense of their heavenly citizenship.

## 2. Separation of Church and State

**Argument Against Christian Nationalism:** Christian Nationalism often seeks to influence government policy to align with specific Christian values, which can blur the lines between church and state. This approach can be problematic as it risks coercing religious beliefs through legislation, rather than through personal conviction and the work of the Holy Spirit.

**Application to the Woke Right:** While the Woke Right may not explicitly seek a theocratic state, it often advocates for policies that reflect conservative Christian values, such as traditional family structures and religious freedoms. The Bible does not advocate for imposing faith through political means. Jesus stated, "My kingdom is not of this world" (**John 18:36**), emphasizing a spiritual rather than political kingdom. Both movements should consider the distinction between influencing society with Christian principles and imposing those principles through political power.

## 3. Love for Neighbor and the Great Commission

**Argument Against Christian Nationalism:** Christian Nationalism can sometimes prioritize defending Christian culture or values over the call to love and serve others, including those who do not share the same beliefs. The Great Commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**) calls believers to make disciples of all nations, focusing on evangelism and discipleship rather than cultural dominance.

**Application to the Woke Right:** The Woke Right may emphasize protecting traditional values, which can sometimes lead to adversarial stances against perceived threats, such as progressive ideologies. However, the Bible emphasizes love for neighbor, including those with whom we disagree (**Matthew 22:39**). Christians are called to engage with others in a spirit of love and humility, rather than through combative or defensive postures.

## 4. Justice and Righteousness

**Argument Against Christian Nationalism:** While Christian Nationalists may seek to legislate morality based on biblical teachings, true justice and righteousness come from a transformed heart and a relationship with

Christ (**Romans 8:3-4**). The Bible calls for believers to act justly and love mercy (**Micah 6:8**), which includes advocating for the oppressed and marginalized.

**Application to the Woke Right:** The Woke Right also emphasizes certain conservative values, which they believe are essential for a just society. However, they must also consider the biblical call to justice and mercy, extending compassion and advocacy to all, regardless of whether they share the same beliefs or values. This means focusing on the biblical principles of justice, love, and humility, rather than merely defending a cultural status quo.

## **5. Avoiding Division and Emphasizing Unity in Christ**

**Argument Against Christian Nationalism:** Christian Nationalism can sometimes lead to division, both within the church and in broader society, by emphasizing national or cultural identity over spiritual unity in Christ.

**Application to the Woke Right:** Similarly, the Woke Right's focus on identity politics, even from a conservative perspective, can lead to division and an "us vs. them" mentality. The Bible calls for unity among believers, transcending earthly distinctions (**Galatians 3:28**). Christians are called to be peacemakers (**Matthew 5:9**) and to seek unity in the body of Christ, focusing on their shared identity in Him.

## **Conclusion**

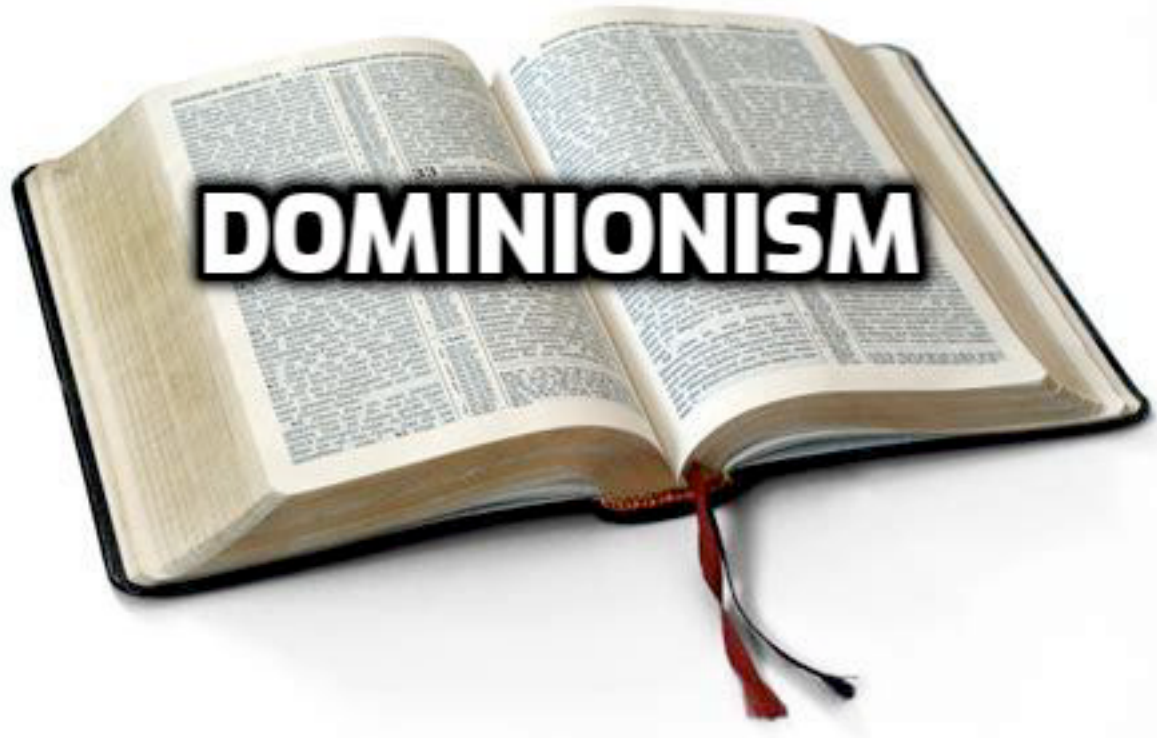
The arguments against Christian Nationalism, rooted in the teachings of the Bible, are also applicable to the Woke Right. Both movements can benefit from a biblical focus on the spiritual nature of God's kingdom, the primacy of personal transformation through the gospel, and the call to love and unity. Christians are encouraged to engage with society thoughtfully and humbly, prioritizing their identity in Christ and the mission of the church over cultural or political objectives. The Woke Right and Christian Nationalism share common ground in their emphasis on preserving traditional values and national identity from a conservative Christian perspective. However, the Bible calls believers to prioritize their identity in Christ, engage with the world through love and truth, and focus on the spiritual transformation that comes through the gospel. While political engagement is a legitimate expression of faith, it must be done in a

manner consistent with the teachings and character of Christ, avoiding division and an overemphasis on earthly power and identity.

**Stay tuned for the next post in this three post series that will look at Domionism and how it is associated with Christian Nationalism and the Woke Right.**

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## Dominionism as Associated with Christian Nationalism and the New Apostolic Reformation



More than ever, our culture seems to be mounting a comprehensive challenge against Christianity. The widespread rejection of truth and the resulting decline in moral values are eroding the Christian principles that once underpinned our North American nations. In this chaotic and often antagonistic environment, Christians face tough questions about their beliefs, and many are struggling to maintain their faith.

This particular post **is the third of three posts** where we will be looking at the following cultural Christian-related topics and how they align with the whole counsel of God's Holy Word:

1. Christian Nationalism;
2. The Woke Right; and
3. **Dominionism.**

If you are not familiar with the **New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)**, the following link found [here](#) will provide you with a detailed overview.

**Dominionism** is a theological belief that Christians are mandated by God to take control of various aspects of society and government to bring about God's kingdom on earth. This ideology often involves influencing politics, law, education, and other cultural spheres. Dominionism can be found in varying degrees and forms across different Christian groups.

**The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)** is a movement within Christianity that emphasizes the restoration of apostles and prophets in the church, believing that these roles are vital for achieving dominion over society. The NAR advocates for a form of Dominionism known as the "Seven Mountain Mandate," which asserts that Christians should seek to influence seven key areas of society: government, media, education, economy, family, religion, and arts/entertainment.

### **Dominionism and Christian Nationalism**

Dominionism, as taught by the NAR, aligns with Christian Nationalism in several ways:

#### **1. Theological Basis for Dominionism:**

Proponents of Dominionism often cite **Genesis 1:28**, where God commands humanity to "fill the earth, and subdue it," and to "have dominion" over all living creatures. They interpret this as a mandate for Christians to exercise authority over all aspects of society. However, this interpretation extends beyond the original context of stewardship over creation and applies it to governance and societal control.

#### **2. The Seven Mountain Mandate:**

The NAR's emphasis on the Seven Mountain Mandate reflects a strategy for Christians to gain influence and control over key societal institutions. This aligns with the goals of Christian Nationalism, which seeks to infuse Christian values into national culture and governance. The Seven Mountains include government, media, education, economy, family, religion, and arts/entertainment, and the NAR teaches that Christians should aim to lead in these areas to transform society according to biblical principles.

3. **View of America as a Christian Nation:**

Similar to Christian Nationalism, many within the NAR view the United States as having a special covenant with God, believing it has a divine destiny to promote Christian values worldwide. They often cite **2 Chronicles 7:14**, "and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land," as a call for national repentance and restoration of a Christian moral order.

4. **Political Involvement:**

The NAR and Dominionism advocate for active Christian participation in politics to legislate morality and bring about God's kingdom on earth. This is akin to Christian Nationalism's desire for a government that reflects Christian values. However, the New Testament does not advocate for Christians to seek political dominion. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (**John 18:36**), indicating that His kingdom operates on a different plane than worldly political systems.

5. **The Role of Apostles and Prophets:**

The NAR emphasizes the restoration of apostles and prophets, who are seen as necessary leaders to guide the church in achieving dominion. This hierarchical structure and the emphasis on prophetic revelation can lead to an authoritarian approach to implementing their vision, which can conflict with the biblical principle of servant leadership (**Matthew 20:25-28**). Furthermore, the Bible warns against false prophets and emphasizes testing all teachings against the Word of God (**1 John 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22**).

## **Scriptural Analysis**

1. **Stewardship vs. Dominionism:**

The biblical concept of stewardship, as seen in **Genesis 1:28**, involves caring for God's creation responsibly, rather than exerting control over societal institutions. Jesus' teachings emphasize humility, service, and love for others (**Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 10:45**).

2. **Spiritual vs. Earthly Kingdom:**

Jesus' ministry focused on the spiritual nature of God's kingdom (**Luke 17:20-21**). The Great Commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**) calls believers to make disciples of all nations, spreading the gospel message, rather than seeking to impose a theocratic rule.

### 3. **Christian Influence vs. Political Power:**

While Christians are called to be salt and light in the world (**Matthew 5:13-16**), the means of influence should be through the gospel and godly living, not through coercive political power. The New Testament does not instruct believers to seek control over governments but to live peaceably, pray for leaders, and witness to the truth (**1 Timothy 2:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-17**).

#### **Conclusion**

Dominionism, as taught by the NAR, shares significant overlaps with Christian Nationalism, particularly in its aim to Christianize culture and government. However, a thorough biblical analysis reveals that the primary mission of Christians is spiritual, focusing on spreading the gospel and living out Christ's teachings. The New Testament does not advocate for seeking political control or enforcing Christian beliefs on others through legislation. Instead, believers are called to be faithful witnesses, demonstrating God's love and truth in every area of life.

**My hope is that this series of three posts brings some clarity with regard to our calling to trust in God and to obey Jesus' commandment to follow the specifics of [the Great Commission](#).**

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## The Christian Right Versus the Christian Left and Vice Versa



I acknowledge that this is another lengthy post but it is necessary to encapsulate the various opposing perspectives and recommend a Biblical solution for your consideration. It is important to note that I don't necessarily agree with all that the Christian Right emphasizes and I don't necessarily agree with all that the Christian Left may emphasize. I agree with what I submit the Bible and Jesus specifically tells the Christian Church to focus on.

### **OPPOSING EVANGELICAL RIGHT AND LEFT CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES**

From an Evangelical Christian perspective, the views on the political left and right can be deeply influenced by religious beliefs and interpretations of the Bible. However, it's important to note that not all Evangelical Christians fit neatly into these categories, and there is diversity within the community. That said, there are some common themes and perspectives

among those on the right who might hold disagreements with those on the left.

### 1. **Biblical Authority and Moral Absolutes**

**Right Perspective:** Evangelicals on the right often emphasize the Bible as the ultimate authority on moral and ethical issues. They believe in absolute moral truths as revealed in Scripture and see these truths as non-negotiable. This leads to a strong stance on issues like abortion, same-sex marriage, and gender identity, which are seen as clearly addressed in the Bible.

**View of the Left:** Those on the right may perceive the left as compromising or relativizing moral standards. They might see the left as prioritizing social and cultural trends over Biblical teachings, leading to a perception that the left undermines traditional values and moral absolutes.

### 2. **Social and Cultural Issues**

**Right Perspective:** Evangelicals on the right often advocate for traditional family structures and roles, believing that these are ordained by God and beneficial for society. They may support policies that they feel protect the sanctity of life, traditional marriage, and religious freedom.

**View of the Left:** There can be a perception that the left promotes a progressive agenda that challenges these traditional values. This includes support for LGBTQ+ rights, abortion rights, and secularism. The right might view the left as pushing an agenda that seeks to redefine fundamental aspects of society in ways that conflict with Biblical teachings.

### 3. **Role of Government and Social Programs**

**Right Perspective:** Evangelicals on the right often hold to a more limited view of government intervention. They emphasize personal responsibility, charity, and the role of the church in addressing social issues. They may be skeptical of large government welfare programs, believing that these can encourage dependency and undermine individual initiative.

**View of the Left:** The left is often seen as advocating for extensive government intervention and social programs to address issues like poverty, healthcare, and inequality. Those on the right may view this as an overreach that encroaches on individual freedoms and

responsibility, and as potentially promoting a secular humanist worldview that downplays the role of faith and the church in society.

#### 4. **Religious Freedom and Secularism**

**Right Perspective:** There is a strong emphasis on religious freedom and the right to practice and express one's faith openly. Evangelicals on the right may feel that their religious freedoms are being threatened by an increasingly secular society that seeks to marginalize religious beliefs and practices, particularly in the public square.

**View of the Left:** The left might be perceived as advocating for a strict separation of church and state, which some on the right interpret as an attempt to remove religion from public life altogether. This can include controversies over prayer in schools, religious symbols in public spaces, and the inclusion of religious perspectives in policy debates.

#### 5. **Globalism vs. Nationalism**

**Right Perspective:** Evangelicals on the right may lean towards a more nationalist perspective, prioritizing the interests and values of their own country. They often emphasize the need to protect national sovereignty and borders, and may be wary of international organizations or treaties that they feel compromise national interests.

**View of the Left:** The left is sometimes viewed as promoting globalism, which can be seen as undermining national identity and sovereignty. There may be concerns about the left's support for policies like open borders, international agreements on climate change, or global economic regulations, which the right might see as compromising national interests or values.

#### 6. **Theological Differences and Biblical Interpretation**

**Right Perspective:** Those on the right may hold to a more literal interpretation of the Bible, often emphasizing prophecy, sin, and the need for repentance. They may also focus on the concept of spiritual warfare and the idea that societal trends are influenced by spiritual forces.

**View of the Left:** The left may be viewed as having a more liberal or progressive approach to theology, often emphasizing social justice, inclusivity, and the historical-critical method of interpreting the Bible. The right might see this as a departure from traditional Biblical teaching and a watering down of the gospel message.

## **Conclusion**

The perspectives outlined above are generalizations and do not apply to all Evangelical Christians or all individuals on the right. There are many Evangelicals who hold views that are more nuanced or different from these generalizations. Additionally, respectful dialogue and understanding are crucial in bridging divides and finding common ground.

## **RIGHT AND WRONG JUDGEMENT**

The Bible advises against judging those outside the church and emphasizes that true transformation comes from a change of heart, not just external conformity to rules. Let's explore these ideas with relevant Scripture references from the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

### **1. Judging Those Outside the Church**

The Apostle Paul addresses the issue of judgment in his first letter to the Corinthians:

- **1 Corinthians 5:12-13 (NASB):**

“For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.”

This passage makes it clear that the primary concern for Christians should be the moral and spiritual conduct within the church, rather than passing judgment on those outside the faith community. Paul emphasizes that it is God's role to judge those who are not part of the church.

### **2. Transformation of the Heart**

The Bible repeatedly underscores that true obedience and righteousness are matters of the heart rather than mere external adherence to rules. Jesus and the prophets highlighted that genuine faith and transformation are internal:

- **Matthew 23:25-26 (NASB):**

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.”

Jesus criticizes the Pharisees for focusing on external appearances while neglecting the inner state of the heart. This teaching underscores the importance of inner transformation over outward compliance.

- **Ezekiel 36:26-27 (NASB):**

“Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”

In the Old Testament, God promises a future transformation for His people, highlighting that obedience comes from a changed heart, made possible by the Spirit of God.

### **3. Limitations of Legislation in Changing Hearts**

The Bible acknowledges that while laws can regulate behaviour, they cannot change the heart. The Apostle Paul discusses this in his letters, particularly in relation to the Law of Moses:

- **Romans 8:3-4 (NASB):**

“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Here, Paul explains that the Law was unable to bring about true righteousness because of human weakness. True transformation and fulfillment of the Law come through the Spirit, not through mere adherence to rules.

- **Galatians 3:21-24 (NASB):**

“Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.”

Paul clarifies that the purpose of the Law was to point people to Christ and highlight the need for faith, not to be the means of imparting life or righteousness.

## **Conclusion**

While Evangelicals on the right may seek to uphold certain moral standards in society, the biblical emphasis is on heart transformation through faith in Jesus Christ rather than enforced external conformity. Christians are called to witness to the truth in love and to trust God to judge those outside the church, while also recognizing that only the Spirit can bring about true and lasting change in individuals.

## **THE GREAT COMMISSION**

The Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:18-20, is a cornerstone of the Christian faith, emphasizing the call to evangelize and make disciples of all nations. This mission focuses on spreading the message of Jesus Christ and the transformative power of the Gospel. Here's how it fits with the instruction not to judge those outside the church and the tendency to prioritize political solutions over evangelism:

### **1. The Great Commission: A Call to Evangelism**

- **Matthew 28:18-20 (NASB):**

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

The Great Commission directs Christians to share the Gospel with everyone, inviting them into a relationship with Christ. This mission is rooted in love and the desire to see lives transformed by the message of Jesus. It prioritizes the spiritual and eternal well-being of individuals over their moral behaviour or adherence to specific laws.

### **2. Not Judging Those Outside the Church**

- **1 Corinthians 5:12-13 (NASB):**

"For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge

those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.” Paul’s instruction to the Corinthians clarifies that Christians should not focus on judging those outside the church. Instead, the emphasis should be on sharing the Gospel and leaving the judgment of those outside the church to God. This aligns with the Great Commission, which calls for evangelism and discipleship rather than condemnation.

### **3. The Role of Political Solutions vs. Spreading the Gospel**

While Christians may engage in the political sphere to advocate for justice and moral principles, the primary mission of the church remains the spreading of the Gospel. Political solutions can address societal issues to some extent, but they cannot bring about the deep, lasting transformation that comes from a changed heart through faith in Christ.

- **Romans 1:16 (NASB):**

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

The Gospel is the power of God for salvation and transformation, something that laws and political systems cannot achieve. While it’s important for Christians to be involved in society and advocate for justice, this should not overshadow the priority of evangelism.

- **2 Corinthians 5:20 (NASB):**

“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

Christians are called to be ambassadors for Christ, focusing on reconciling people to God. This ambassadorial role emphasizes spreading the message of reconciliation and hope found in Jesus, rather than merely seeking to impose moral behavior through legislation.

### **Conclusion**

The Great Commission calls Christians to prioritize the spreading of the Gospel and making disciples. This mission is rooted in love and the desire to see individuals transformed by Christ, rather than in judging or condemning those outside the church. While engagement in political and social issues can be part of a Christian’s life, it should not overshadow the

primary focus on evangelism and discipleship. The Gospel's transformative power goes beyond external compliance with laws, aiming for a deep, heart-level change that only faith in Christ can bring.

## **PHARISEE IMPLICATIONS**

It can be fair to draw parallels between certain behaviours within the Christian Right and the actions Jesus condemned in the Pharisees, but this must be approached with nuance and care. The Pharisees, as depicted in the Gospels, were often criticized by Jesus for their focus on external religiosity, legalism, and a lack of genuine compassion and humility. Here's how these criticisms might be relevant:

### **1. Legalism and External Conformity**

The Pharisees were known for their strict adherence to the Law and for imposing detailed regulations on others. Jesus criticized them for focusing on the letter of the law while neglecting its spirit.

- **Matthew 23:23-24 (NASB):**

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!”

Some within the Christian Right may be seen as similarly focusing on moral and cultural issues, advocating for laws and policies that align with Christian values. While these concerns are important, there's a risk of prioritizing external conformity over heart-level transformation and genuine discipleship. The focus can sometimes shift from sharing the love and grace of Christ to enforcing moral standards, which may not lead to the spiritual renewal that the Gospel seeks to bring about.

### **2. Judgment and Exclusion**

Jesus also rebuked the Pharisees for their judgmental attitudes and exclusivity, which often led to marginalizing and excluding others, particularly those they deemed sinners or unclean.

- **Luke 18:9-14 (NASB):**

“And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with

contempt: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: "God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector." ... But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

There is a danger that some within the Christian Right could adopt a similar attitude, viewing themselves as morally superior and others as inferior or unworthy. This can create a barrier to effective evangelism and compassion, as it focuses more on condemning sin than on extending grace and forgiveness.

### **3. Neglect of Justice, Mercy, and Faithfulness**

The Pharisees were often rebuked for neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness in favor of maintaining a strict outward appearance of religiosity.

- **Matthew 23:27-28 (NASB):**  
"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

If the Christian Right focuses too heavily on political power and legal enforcement of moral standards, they may risk neglecting the broader biblical calls to justice, mercy, and love. The Gospel calls for an inward transformation that leads to outward expressions of love and justice, rather than merely enforcing moral behavior.

### **Conclusion**

While not all members of the Christian Right display these tendencies, it's important for Christians to self-reflect and ensure that their actions align with the heart and teachings of Jesus. The goal should always be to share the love, grace, and truth of the Gospel, focusing on heart transformation

rather than mere outward conformity. Jesus' rebukes of the Pharisees serve as a reminder to prioritize genuine faith, humility, and compassion over legalism and judgment.

## **ERRORS ON BOTH SIDES**

Both the conservative right and the liberal left within the Christian Church can err in their approach, especially in light of the Great Commission. The Great Commission calls Christians to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded (Matthew 28:18-20, NASB). Errors can arise when either side emphasizes certain aspects of the faith at the expense of others or when they stray from the core mission of the Church. Here's a look at potential errors on both sides:

### **1. Conservative Right: Overemphasis on Moralism and Legalism**

#### **Error:**

The conservative right can sometimes focus heavily on moral issues and legalistic interpretations of Scripture. This can lead to prioritizing external conformity to moral standards over the inner transformation that the Gospel seeks. There might be a tendency to judge or condemn those outside the Church rather than focusing on sharing the Gospel message of grace and forgiveness.

#### **In Light of the Great Commission:**

The Great Commission emphasizes making disciples, which involves both teaching and transforming lives through the power of the Gospel. An overemphasis on moralism can overshadow the message of grace and the need for personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. The mission can become more about defending cultural and moral values than spreading the message of salvation and reconciliation with God.

### **2. Liberal Left: Overemphasis on Social Justice and Inclusivity**

#### **Error:**

The liberal left often emphasizes social justice, inclusivity, and relational evangelism. While these are important aspects of Christian faith, there can be a tendency to downplay or reinterpret traditional doctrines, particularly regarding sin, salvation, and the authority of Scripture. There may also be

an inclination to avoid calling people to repentance, focusing instead on acceptance and tolerance.

### **In Light of the Great Commission:**

The Great Commission calls for teaching obedience to all that Jesus commanded, which includes difficult truths about sin, repentance, and the need for a Savior. An overemphasis on social justice and inclusivity can sometimes lead to neglecting the need for personal conversion and the proclamation of the Gospel's core message. This can result in a diluted presentation of the faith that focuses more on ethical living and social issues than on spiritual transformation and discipleship.

### **3. Balancing the Great Commission**

Both the conservative right and the liberal left can benefit from a balanced approach that fully embraces the Great Commission. This includes:

- **Proclaiming the Gospel Message:**  
Clearly communicating the need for repentance and faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- **Teaching Biblical Truth:**  
Upholding the authority of Scripture and teaching all that Jesus commanded, including both moral and ethical teachings as well as doctrines of grace, mercy, and forgiveness.
- **Discipleship and Transformation:**  
Focusing on the transformation of the heart through the work of the Holy Spirit, leading to a life of obedience and service.
- **Engaging in Social Justice:**  
Acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God (Micah 6:8), which involves advocating for the marginalized and addressing societal injustices, while also maintaining a commitment to Biblical truth.
- **Living Out Christian Love:**  
Demonstrating Christ's love through compassionate and humble engagement with others, both within and outside the church.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, both the conservative right and the liberal left within the Christian Church can err by overemphasizing certain aspects of the faith at the expense of others. The Great Commission calls for a holistic approach that includes evangelism, teaching, discipleship, and social engagement, all

rooted in the transformative power of the Gospel. Balancing these elements ensures that the Church remains faithful to its mission and effectively witnesses to the world.

## **MISPLACED JUDGEMENT**

Judging those outside the church can indeed close the door that God calls Christians to open through the Great Commission. The primary mission of the Church is to share the Gospel and make disciples, extending God's love, grace, and forgiveness to all people. Judging those outside the church can hinder this mission in several ways:

### **1. Creating Barriers to the Gospel**

When Christians judge those outside the church, it can create a sense of alienation and exclusion. This judgment can be perceived as hypocritical or self-righteous, which can push people away rather than draw them closer to Christ.

- **James 4:12 (NASB):**

“There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbour?”

By setting ourselves up as judges, we risk taking on a role that belongs to God alone. This can prevent others from experiencing the unconditional love and acceptance that God offers through Jesus Christ.

### **2. Missing the Heart of the Gospel Message**

The core message of the Gospel is one of grace, mercy, and redemption. Jesus came to seek and save the lost, and His ministry was characterized by compassion and a call to repentance. Judging those outside the church can shift the focus from this message of grace to one of condemnation.

- **John 3:17 (NASB):**

“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

The mission of the Church is to share this message of salvation, not to condemn. When Christians judge others, they may inadvertently obscure the Gospel's invitation to come to Christ just as they are.

### **3. Blocking Opportunities for Genuine Engagement**

Judgmental attitudes can block opportunities for genuine, compassionate

engagement with those who do not yet know Christ. People are more likely to respond positively to a message of hope, love, and understanding rather than criticism or condemnation.

- **Colossians 4:5-6 (NASB):**

“Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

Approaching others with grace and wisdom opens doors for meaningful conversations about faith and life. It creates an environment where people feel safe to explore and ask questions about Christianity.

#### **4. Reflecting Christ’s Love and Humility**

Jesus exemplified humility and compassion in His interactions, even with those considered sinners by society. He demonstrated that true transformation comes from a personal encounter with God’s love and truth, not through condemnation.

- **Matthew 9:10-13 (NASB):**

“Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining at the table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, ‘Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?’ But when Jesus heard this, He said, ‘It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: “I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,” for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.’”

Jesus’ approach shows that Christians should reach out with compassion, seeking to heal and restore rather than judge and exclude.

#### **Conclusion**

Judging those outside the church can indeed close the door to the very mission God calls Christians to pursue: sharing the Gospel and making disciples. The message of Jesus is one of grace, love, and redemption, and Christians are called to reflect this in their interactions with others. By focusing on sharing the Good News with humility and compassion, Christians can open doors to meaningful conversations and relationships,

ultimately leading others to experience the transformative love of Christ.

## **JUDGEMENT WITHIN THE CHURCH**

The Bible indeed instructs Christians to judge themselves and each other within the church in a manner that promotes unity, purity, and love. This self-examination is essential for healing divisions, including those between the conservative right and liberal left sides of evangelical Christianity. The biblical method of doing this involves several key principles and practices:

### **1. Self-Examination and Repentance**

#### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **1 Corinthians 11:28-31 (NASB):**  
"But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged."

Self-examination involves honestly assessing one's own beliefs, attitudes, and actions in light of Scripture. It requires humility and a willingness to repent for areas where we fall short, whether in doctrine, behaviour, or attitudes toward others.

### **2. Unity in Essential Doctrine**

#### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Ephesians 4:3-6 (NASB):**  
"Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all."

The Bible calls for unity in essential Christian doctrines, such as the nature of God, the person and work of Jesus Christ, and the authority of Scripture. Both conservative and liberal Christians should strive to find common ground on these core beliefs while allowing freedom in non-essential areas.

### **3. Speaking the Truth in Love**

#### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Ephesians 4:15 (NASB):**  
"But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ."

Disagreements should be approached with a spirit of love and humility, prioritizing the well-being and spiritual growth of the other person. This involves avoiding harsh judgments, inflammatory language, and personal attacks, focusing instead on constructive dialogue.

### **4. Mutual Respect and Understanding**

#### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Romans 14:1-4 (NASB):**  
"Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand."

Christians are called to respect one another's convictions, especially in disputable matters. This mutual respect helps to prevent divisions and fosters an environment where different perspectives can coexist in love.

### **5. Forgiveness and Reconciliation**

#### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Colossians 3:13-14 (NASB):**  
"Bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity."

Forgiveness is crucial in healing divisions. Christians are called to forgive as Christ forgave, which includes letting go of grievances and actively seeking reconciliation. This fosters a community where love and unity can flourish despite differences.

## **6. Focus on Common Mission**

### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Philippians 2:2-4 (NASB):**

“Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”

The church’s mission is to glorify God, spread the Gospel, and make disciples. Keeping this mission central helps prevent divisions from overshadowing the church’s primary purpose.

### **Conclusion**

Healing division within the church requires humility, love, and a commitment to biblical truth. By engaging in self-examination, maintaining unity in essential doctrines, speaking the truth in love, respecting diverse perspectives, practicing forgiveness, and focusing on the common mission, Christians can work towards healing divisions and building a stronger, more united church. This process reflects Christ’s prayer for unity among His followers (John 17:20-23) and helps the church present a unified witness to the world.

## **CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM**

Christian Nationalism generally aligns more closely with the conservative right perspective within evangelical Christianity, although it is not universally accepted even within that group. It emphasizes the idea that the United States (or another nation) is fundamentally a Christian nation and that its laws, policies, and cultural practices should reflect Christian values. Here’s how Christian Nationalism contrasts with both the conservative right and the liberal left perspectives:

## 1. Alignment with the Conservative Right

- **Emphasis on Moral and Cultural Values:**  
Christian Nationalists often advocate for policies and laws that reflect traditional Christian moral values, such as opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage. This aligns with the conservative right's emphasis on upholding Biblical morality in public life.
- **Political Engagement:**  
Like many on the conservative right, Christian Nationalists believe in active political engagement to influence society according to Christian principles. They may support the idea that Christians should hold political power to enact laws that align with their beliefs.
- **Patriotism and National Identity:**  
Christian Nationalists often intertwine patriotism with their faith, viewing the nation as having a special covenant with God. This can resonate with conservative Christians who also hold a high view of national identity and believe in the moral and religious heritage of their country.

## 2. Contrasts with the Liberal Left

- **Separation of Church and State:**  
The liberal left generally advocates for a clear separation between church and state, emphasizing religious freedom and cautioning against the imposition of religious beliefs through legislation. This stands in contrast to the Christian Nationalist view that seeks to embed Christian principles in public policy.
- **Inclusivity and Pluralism:**  
Liberal Christians often emphasize inclusivity, tolerance, and the acceptance of diverse religious and non-religious perspectives in public life. They may be concerned that Christian Nationalism's approach can marginalize those of other faiths or no faith, and lead to a form of religious authoritarianism.
- **Social Justice Focus:**  
While Christian Nationalism often prioritizes moral issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage, the liberal left typically places a stronger emphasis on social justice issues like racial equality, economic justice, and environmental stewardship. They may critique Christian Nationalism for neglecting these issues or using religious

language to justify unjust policies.

## **Challenges and Critiques of Christian Nationalism**

- **Theological Concerns:**  
Critics argue that Christian Nationalism conflates religious and national identity in ways that can distort the Gospel. They warn against idolatry of the nation and caution that equating one's country with God's kingdom can lead to uncritical support of national policies that may be unjust or unbiblical.
- **Witness and Evangelism:**  
There is concern that Christian Nationalism can harm the church's witness by alienating non-Christians and those who may not share the same political views. It can also shift focus from the church's mission of spreading the Gospel to a focus on political power and cultural dominance.

## **Conclusion**

Christian Nationalism fits more closely with the conservative right side of evangelical Christianity due to shared views on moral values and political engagement. However, it is not without controversy, even within conservative circles, due to concerns about its theological implications and impact on the church's mission. It contrasts sharply with the liberal left, which emphasizes separation of church and state, inclusivity, and social justice. Both sides of the spectrum have valid concerns about Christian Nationalism's approach and potential consequences.

## **MINIMIZE OUR ERRORS**

To minimize the errors on both the right and left sides of evangelical Christianity, it's crucial to focus on the core biblical mandate of the Great Commission and other key teachings of the Bible. The Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:18-20, calls Christians to make disciples of all nations, baptize them, and teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded. Here's a biblical framework that can help guide both sides towards a balanced, Christ-centered approach:

### **1. Emphasizing the Gospel of Grace**

#### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB):**

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

The Gospel is fundamentally about God’s grace offered through Jesus Christ. Both sides should focus on sharing this message of salvation, emphasizing that it is not about moral perfection or social action alone, but about faith in Christ and His redemptive work.

## **2. Pursuing Unity in Christ**

### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Ephesians 4:3-6 (NASB):**

“Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”

Unity in Christ is essential. Christians are called to focus on their shared faith in Jesus and the core doctrines of Christianity, avoiding divisions over non-essential matters. This unity should be grounded in love and humility, recognizing the diversity within the body of Christ.

## **3. Balanced Engagement in Social and Moral Issues**

### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Micah 6:8 (NASB):**

“He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Christians are called to act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. This includes advocating for social justice and moral integrity. The right tends to focus on moral issues, while the left often emphasizes social justice. A balanced approach recognizes the importance of both, aiming to reflect Christ’s compassion and righteousness in all areas of life.

## **4. Prioritizing Love and Compassion**

### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **John 13:34-35 (NASB):**

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus commanded His followers to love one another. This love should extend to all people, inside and outside the church. Both sides must be careful not to let political or cultural differences hinder their witness of Christ’s love. Demonstrating compassion and understanding can bridge divides and open doors for the Gospel.

## **5. Humility and Repentance**

### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **James 4:6 (NASB):**

“But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, ‘God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

Humility is key to avoiding errors and divisions. Both the right and left must be willing to listen, repent where necessary, and seek God’s guidance. Acknowledging human limitations and biases helps prevent the kind of pride that can lead to division and strife.

## **6. Focus on Discipleship and Spiritual Growth**

### **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Colossians 1:28 (NASB):**

“We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.”

The church’s mission includes making disciples who grow in maturity and understanding of their faith. This involves teaching Biblical truth, fostering spiritual growth, and encouraging believers to live out their faith in every aspect of life.

## **Conclusion**

To minimize errors, both the conservative right and the liberal left within evangelical Christianity should return to the core of the Great Commission: sharing the Gospel, making disciples, and teaching obedience to Christ’s commands. This involves emphasizing grace, pursuing unity, engaging in

balanced social and moral action, prioritizing love, practicing humility, and focusing on discipleship. By doing so, the church can better reflect Christ's love and truth, avoiding the pitfalls of extreme positions and remaining faithful to its mission.

## **POLITICAL POWER SOLUTIONS VERSUS THE GREAT COMMISSION**

"Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." The idea behind this statement is that as individuals or groups acquire more power, the potential for corruption and misuse of that power increases. The more power one holds, the greater the temptation and capacity for moral compromise and abuse, which can lead to increasingly corrupt behaviour.

It can be argued that imposing Christian morals through political means on those who do not share the faith can conflict with the principles of the Great Commission. The Great Commission, as stated in Matthew 28:19-20, calls Christians to make disciples of all nations by teaching and baptizing them, not by coercing them into following Christian morals through legislation or political power. Christian teaching emphasizes sharing the message of the Gospel through example, dialogue, and personal relationship rather than through force or legislation. The aim is to win hearts and minds by the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than through external compulsion.

Pursuing imposed morality in a nation where Christian beliefs are declining can indeed make the fulfillment of the Great Commission more challenging. **When Christianity becomes associated with political agendas or moral imposition, it can alienate people who might otherwise be open to hearing the Gospel message.** This can result in greater resistance to the faith and create barriers to genuine dialogue and relationship-building.

**The Great Commission is about inviting people into a transformative relationship with Christ, not merely enforcing certain behaviours or moral standards. If Christian efforts are perceived as coercive or politically motivated, it can detract from the authentic, relational, and compassionate approach that is often more effective in reaching people's hearts and minds.**

**Engaging in meaningful, respectful conversations and demonstrating the love of Christ through actions and relationships tends to be more aligned with the spirit of the Great Commission.**

**For your consideration.**

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## Circumventing God's Will



I acknowledge that this is another lengthy post but the connecting of the dots is necessary to weight the consequences and/or ramifications of the topic being discussed. My apology. Perhaps consider saving this post for a Saturday morning reading when more time is readily available. I've been working on this post for a couple of months now. I believe the connecting of the dots is significant and I respectfully submit it to you for your consideration.

### **CLARIFYING STATEMENT ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF FOLLOWING GOD'S WILL**

**Any time that man takes from God what is His alone to accomplish or fulfil, or sets aside what He has already accomplished and endeavours to bring it about ourselves, we do error and thereby we circumvent or negate His will.**

Is this a valid biblical statement? I would submit that the Bible confirms that it is. The Bible teaches that God's sovereignty and His purposes cannot be thwarted by human actions. Attempting to take on roles or

responsibilities that belong to God alone, or disregarding His completed work, is considered an error. Here are some Scripture references that support this statement:

1. **Isaiah 55:8-9:**

- "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts."
- This passage highlights the profound difference between God's ways and human ways, underscoring the error in attempting to assume His role.

2. **Proverbs 19:21:**

- "Many plans are in a person's heart, But the advice of the Lord will stand."
- This verse emphasizes that human plans are subordinate to God's purposes, reinforcing the futility of trying to circumvent His will.

3. **Jeremiah 10:23:**

- "I know, Lord, that a person's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a person who walks to direct his steps."
- This indicates that humans do not have the ultimate control over their paths, which is reserved for God.

4. **James 4:13-15:**

- "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.'"
- This passage admonishes planning without seeking God's will, highlighting the error in setting aside His sovereignty.

5. **John 15:5:**

- "I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."
- Jesus emphasizes that apart from Him, we can accomplish nothing of true spiritual value, indicating the error in trying to

fulfill what God has already accomplished or what is His alone to fulfill.

6. **Romans 9:20-21:**

- “On the contrary, who are you, you foolish person, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this,’ will it? Or does the potter not have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one object for honourable use, and another for common use?”
- This illustrates the error in questioning or attempting to override God’s sovereign purposes and designs.

These scriptures collectively affirm that assuming roles or responsibilities that belong to God, or disregarding His accomplished work, is an error and a negation of His will.

## **ARGUMENTS RAISED**

### **Arguments Raised Against Christians Always Needing to Adhere to God’s Will:**

#### **Argument 1: Human Free Will and Autonomy**

**Objection:** Some argue that humans have free will and should be allowed to make their own choices, even if those choices sometimes go against God’s will.

#### **Biblical Response:**

- **Proverbs 3:5-6:** “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”
  - This passage emphasizes the importance of trusting in God rather than relying on human autonomy. It points to the wisdom and guidance that come from submitting to God’s will.
- **Jeremiah 10:23:** “I know, Lord, that a person’s way is not in himself, Nor is it in a person who walks to direct his steps.”
  - This verse suggests that true direction and purpose come from God, not from human autonomy. It underscores the need for divine guidance in our lives.

## **Argument 2: The Complexity of Understanding God's Will**

**Objection:** It is often argued that God's will can be complex or unclear, making it difficult for Christians to always know or follow it accurately.

### **Biblical Response:**

- **James 1:5:** "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."
  - This encourages believers to seek wisdom from God, who promises to provide guidance generously. It implies that even if God's will seems complex, He is willing to help us understand it.
- **Psalms 119:105:** "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
  - This verse highlights the clarity and guidance provided by God's Word. Studying the Bible helps believers discern God's will more accurately.

## **Argument 3: God's Grace Covers Human Failures**

**Objection:** Some might argue that since God's grace covers human sins and failures, it is not always critical to adhere strictly to God's will.

### **Biblical Response:**

- **Romans 6:1-2:** "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?"
  - Paul strongly refutes the idea that grace gives license to sin. Instead, grace should lead to a transformed life that seeks to adhere to God's will.
- **Titus 2:11-12:** "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age."
  - This passage shows that God's grace teaches us to live in a way that aligns with His will, denying ungodliness and worldly desires.

## **Argument 4: Cultural Relevance and Adaptation**

**Objection:** Some claim that in modern or diverse cultural contexts, strict adherence to God's will as revealed in the Bible may not always be relevant or practical.

**Biblical Response:**

- **Romans 12:2:** "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."
  - This verse instructs believers not to conform to the world but to seek transformation through renewing their minds, thereby discerning and proving God's will.
- **Acts 5:29:** "But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men.'"
  - This response to external pressures emphasizes the priority of God's will over societal or cultural norms.

**Argument 5: The Challenge of Suffering and Sacrifice**

**Objection:** Some argue that following God's will can lead to suffering or sacrifice, which may deter people from adhering to it strictly.

**Biblical Response:**

- **1 Peter 4:19:** "Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right."
  - This encourages believers to trust God even in suffering, recognizing that following His will can sometimes involve hardship.
- **Romans 8:28:** "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."
  - This assures believers that even in suffering, God works for their good, encouraging them to remain faithful to His will.

While there are various arguments against always adhering to God's will, the Bible consistently emphasizes the importance of trust, wisdom, grace, non-conformity to the world, and faithfulness even in suffering. These

biblical responses reinforce the necessity and value of aligning with God's will in all aspects of life.

## **PRIMARY LESSONS**

**One of the primary lessons that God instills in us is the difference between our attempts at replacing God with our own endeavours, thereby becoming our own god and the distinct difference that following His will produces.**

### **Overview: The Objectives and Results of Two Paths**

The Bible clearly distinguishes between the path of following God's will and the path of relying on our own endeavours, effectively replacing God with ourselves. Here, we'll explore these two paths in detail, using NASB Scripture references.

#### **1. Following Our Own Endeavours to Be Our Own God**

##### **Objectives:**

- Self-glorification and self-sufficiency
- Pursuit of personal desires and ambitions
- Reliance on human wisdom and understanding
- Seeking independence from God

##### **Results:**

###### **a. Separation from God:**

- **Genesis 3:5-6** – The Fall of Man illustrates the desire to be like God, knowing good and evil, which resulted in separation from Him. "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
- **Romans 1:21-22** – Humanity's failure to honor God leads to futile thinking and darkened hearts. "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools."

###### **b. Spiritual and Moral Degradation:**

- **Romans 1:28-32** – Turning away from God results in a depraved mind and unrighteous behaviour. “And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”

### c. Destruction and Death:

- **Proverbs 14:12** – The way that seems right to a man ends in death. “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”
- **Romans 6:23** – The wages of sin is death. “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

## 2. Following God’s Will

### Objectives:

- Glorification of God and submission to His authority
- Pursuit of righteousness and holiness
- Reliance on divine wisdom and guidance
- Seeking communion and relationship with God

### Results:

#### a. Intimate Relationship with God:

- **James 4:8** – Drawing near to God results in Him drawing near to us. “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”
- **John 15:5** – Abiding in Christ leads to a fruitful relationship. “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”

#### b. Spiritual Transformation and Renewal:

- **Romans 12:2** – Being transformed by the renewing of the mind enables us to discern God’s will. “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”
- **2 Corinthians 5:17** – In Christ, we become new creatures. “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

### **c. Eternal Life and Abundant Blessings:**

- **John 10:10** – Jesus came to give life abundantly. “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”
- **John 3:16** – Believing in Jesus grants eternal life. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

The contrast between following our own endeavors and following God’s will is stark. The former leads to separation from God, moral degradation, and ultimately, destruction. The latter leads to an intimate relationship with God, spiritual renewal, and eternal life. By submitting to God’s authority and seeking His guidance, we align ourselves with His perfect will, which is the path to true fulfillment and eternal joy.

## **ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES**

**Knowing the will of God is essential to successfully walking with God, just as doing the will of God is.**

Knowing and doing the will of God are indeed central themes in the Bible, which provides several principles and specific guidance on how to discern His will. Here is a brief overview with Scripture references:

### **1. Seek God Through His Word**

The Bible is the primary means by which God reveals His will to us. By studying and meditating on Scripture, we align our minds with God’s thoughts.

- **Psalm 119:105:** “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17:** "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

## **2. Pray for Wisdom and Guidance**

Prayer is essential in seeking God's will. We are encouraged to ask God for wisdom and guidance.

- **James 1:5:** "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."
- **Philippians 4:6-7:** "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

## **3. Follow the Leading of the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in guiding believers into the truth and revealing God's will.

- **John 16:13:** "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."
- **Romans 8:14:** "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

## **4. Seek Godly Counsel**

The Bible encourages seeking advice from mature, godly individuals who can provide wisdom and perspective.

- **Proverbs 11:14:** "Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory."
- **Proverbs 15:22:** "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed."

## **5. Observe Circumstances and Open Doors**

God often directs us through circumstances, aligning our path with His will. However, it's important to discern this alongside Scripture and prayer.

- **Revelation 3:8:** "I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name."
- **Acts 16:6-10:** Paul's missionary journey was directed by closed and open doors, demonstrating God's guidance through circumstances.

## **6. Submit to God's Sovereignty and Trust Him**

Understanding God's will requires a heart of submission and trust in His greater plan, even when it's not fully understood.

- **Proverbs 3:5-6:** "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."
- **Romans 12:1-2:** "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

## **7. Live a Life of Obedience and Holiness**

Living in accordance with God's revealed will in Scripture positions us to better understand His specific will for our lives.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:3:** "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality."
- **Micah 6:8:** "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

By following these biblical principles, believers can discern and walk in the will of God, knowing that His plans are perfect and His guidance is trustworthy.

## **JESUS IS OUR EXAMPLE**

Jesus Christ is the perfect example of doing the will of God the Father. His life and ministry consistently demonstrated obedience, submission, and

alignment with God's will. Here is a brief overview with Scripture references:

## 1. Commitment to God's Will from the Beginning

From the start of His earthly life, Jesus was committed to the Father's will.

- **John 6:38:** "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

## 2. Submission and Obedience

Jesus consistently demonstrated submission to the Father's will, even in the face of suffering and death.

- **Philippians 2:8:** "Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."
- **Luke 22:42:** "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."

## 3. Fulfilling Prophecy

Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, showing His life was in alignment with God's predetermined plan.

- **Matthew 26:54:** "How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?"
- **John 19:28:** "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, 'I am thirsty.'"

## 4. Teaching and Ministry

Jesus taught and acted in ways that reflected His commitment to the Father's will.

- **John 5:19:** "Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.'"
- **John 8:28-29:** "So Jesus said, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. And He

who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

## **5. Prayer and Dependence on God**

Jesus often withdrew to pray, demonstrating His reliance on the Father for guidance and strength.

- **Mark 1:35:** “In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.”
- **Luke 6:12:** “It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.”

## **6. Accomplishing God’s Redemptive Plan**

Jesus’ entire mission was to accomplish the Father’s plan of salvation.

- **John 4:34:** “Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.’”
- **John 17:4:** “I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”

## **7. Glorifying the Father**

Jesus’ ultimate aim in doing the Father’s will was to glorify God.

- **John 12:27-28:** “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.’ Then a voice came out of heaven: ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.’”
- **John 17:1:** “Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You.’”

## **8. The Cross and Resurrection**

Jesus’ death and resurrection were the ultimate fulfillment of God’s will, providing salvation for humanity.

- **Isaiah 53:10:** “But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.”

- **Matthew 26:39:** "And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.'"
- **Hebrews 10:7:** "Then I said, 'Behold, I have come (In the scroll of the book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God.'"

By examining these Scriptures, we see that Jesus personified doing the will of God the Father in every aspect of His life and ministry, from His humble beginnings to His sacrificial death and triumphant resurrection. His perfect obedience serves as the ultimate example for believers to follow.

Here are 15 Scripture references that exemplify how Jesus perfectly followed the will of God the Father:

1. **John 4:34:**
  - "Jesus \*said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.'"
2. **John 5:19:**
  - "Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.'"
3. **John 5:30:**
  - "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."
4. **John 6:38:**
  - "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."
5. **John 8:28-29:**
  - "So Jesus said, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.'"
6. **John 10:17-18:**
  - "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it

down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

7. **John 12:49-50:**

- “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”

8. **John 14:31:**

- “But so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.”

9. **John 17:4:**

- “I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”

10. **Luke 22:42:**

- “saying, ‘Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.’”

11. **Matthew 26:39:**

- “And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.’”

12. **Matthew 26:42:**

- “He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.’”

13. **Hebrews 10:7:**

- “Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (In the scroll of the book it is written of Me) To do Your will, O God.’”

14. **Hebrews 10:9:**

- “then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will.’ He takes away the first in order to establish the second.”

15. **Philippians 2:8:**

- “Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

These passages collectively highlight Jesus’ unwavering commitment to following the will of God the Father throughout His life and ministry.

## DEEDS VERSUS FOLLOWING GOD'S WILL

### Performing Deeds Rather Than Following God's Will

Matthew 7:22-24 emphasizes the importance of doing God's will over mere profession of faith or performing works without genuine obedience to Him. Here is a detailed overview with NASB Scripture references on how our actions must align with God's will:

#### Matthew 7:22-24 (NASB)

**22** "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' **23** And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.' **24** Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock."

#### 1. Genuine Obedience Over Mere Profession

Profession of faith is not enough; genuine obedience to God's commands is required.

- **Matthew 7:21:** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."
- **James 1:22:** "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."

#### 2. Knowing Christ Through Relationship

A relationship with Jesus is marked by obedience and knowing Him personally.

- **John 10:14:** "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me."
- **1 John 2:3-4:** "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

#### 3. Avoiding Lawlessness

Practicing lawlessness is a sign of not being in line with God's will, regardless of miraculous deeds performed.

- **1 John 3:4:** "Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness."
- **Matthew 13:41-42:** "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

#### **4. Building on a Firm Foundation**

True discipleship is likened to building on a solid foundation, which involves hearing and acting upon Jesus' words.

- **Luke 6:46-48:** "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built."
- **1 Corinthians 3:11:** "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

#### **5. Fruit as Evidence of Doing God's Will**

The evidence of being in line with God's will is seen in the fruit produced in one's life.

- **Matthew 7:16-20:** "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."
- **John 15:5:** "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

#### **6. The Cost of Discipleship**

Aligning our actions with God's will requires self-denial and bearing one's cross, following Jesus wholeheartedly.

- **Matthew 16:24:** "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.'"
- **Luke 14:27:** "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

## **7. Consistency Between Words and Actions**

Our words must match our actions, reflecting genuine faith through obedience.

- **1 John 3:18:** "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."
- **James 2:17:** "Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself."

Matthew 7:22-24 teaches that what we do must be in line with God's will, as shown through genuine obedience, a personal relationship with Christ, avoidance of lawlessness, building on a firm foundation, producing good fruit, and consistency between words and actions. These principles, supported by Scripture references, underscore the importance of aligning our actions with God's will.

Here are 20 Scripture verses from both the Old and New Testaments (NASB translation) that validate the statement: **"Any time that man takes from God what is His alone to accomplish or fulfil or set aside what He has already accomplished and endeavour to bring it about ourselves, we do error and thereby we circumvent or negate His will."**

### **Old Testament:**

#### **1. Genesis 11:4-6**

They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. The LORD said, "Behold, they are one people,

and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.”

2. **Exodus 14:13-14**

But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent.”

3. **Exodus 20:3**

“You shall have no other gods before Me.”

4. **Leviticus 10:1-2**

Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

5. **Deuteronomy 4:2**

“You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”

6. **1 Samuel 13:12-14**

“Therefore I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the LORD.’ So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering.” Samuel said to Saul, “You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”

7. **Psalms 127:1**

Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain.

8. **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

**9. Proverbs 14:12**

There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

**10. Isaiah 31:1**

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help And rely on horses, And trust in chariots because they are many And in horsemen because they are very strong, But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!

**New Testament:**

**1. Matthew 6:10**

"Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven."

**2. John 15:5**

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

**3. Romans 12:2**

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

**4. 1 Corinthians 3:6-7**

I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

**5. Galatians 2:20**

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

**6. Ephesians 2:8-9**

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**7. Philippians 2:13**

For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

**8. Colossians 2:8**

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

**9. Hebrews 12:2**

fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**10. James 4:13-15**

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

These verses collectively emphasize that human efforts to take on what is God's role or to set aside His accomplishments often lead to error and go against His will. They highlight the necessity of relying on God's sovereignty, wisdom, and guidance.

## **ALIGNING OUR LIVES WITH GOD'S WILL AND PURPOSES**

**Relying on God's sovereignty, wisdom, and guidance is essential for living a life that aligns with His will and purposes.** The following Scripture references expand upon this necessity:

### **God's Sovereignty:**

**1. Psalm 115:3**

But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

**2. Isaiah 46:9-10**

"Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.'"

**3. Daniel 4:35**

"All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'"

**4. Ephesians 1:11**

also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined

according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.

### **God's Wisdom:**

**1. Proverbs 3:5-7**

Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.

**2. Isaiah 55:8-9**

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts."

**3. Romans 11:33-34**

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

**4. 1 Corinthians 1:25**

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

### **God's Guidance:**

**1. Psalm 32:8**

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.

**2. Psalm 37:23-24**

The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.

**3. Isaiah 30:21**

Your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

**4. John 16:13**

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

**5. James 1:5**

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

**Combination of Sovereignty, Wisdom, and Guidance:**

**1. Jeremiah 29:11**

'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'

**2. Romans 8:28**

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

**3. Philippians 4:6-7**

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**4. Colossians 1:9-10**

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

**5. 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

**6. Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

**7. 1 Peter 5:6-7**

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

These verses illustrate the importance of trusting in God's sovereignty, seeking His wisdom, and following His guidance. They highlight the futility of relying on human understanding and efforts in place of God's perfect plans and purposes.

**Ten of the most validating Scriptures emphasize that what God does and not what we do is vitally important. Our role as His sheep showcases our trust and reliance on Him rather than ourselves.**

### **Scriptures Emphasizing It Is What God Does**

**1. Isaiah 55:8-9**

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

**2. Ephesians 2:8-9**

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

**3. Philippians 2:13**

"For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

**4. Romans 9:16**

"So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy."

**5. 2 Corinthians 3:5**

"Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God."

**6. Jeremiah 10:23**

"I know, O Lord, that a man's way is not in himself, nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps."

**7. John 15:5**

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

**8. Psalm 127:1**

"Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain."

9. **Isaiah 26:12**

“Lord, You will establish peace for us, since You have also performed for us all our works.”

10. **Hebrews 12:2**

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

**Scriptures Emphasizing Our Trust and Reliance in God**

1. **Psalm 23:1-3**

“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”

2. **Proverbs 3:5-6**

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

3. **Psalm 28:7**

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall thank Him.”

4. **John 10:27-28**

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”

5. **Isaiah 40:11**

“Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, in His arm He will gather the lambs and carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes.”

6. **Psalm 56:3-4**

“When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. In God, whose word I praise, in God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?”

7. **1 Peter 5:7**

“Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

8. **Matthew 6:31-33**

“Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we

drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

9. **Psalm 62:5-8**

“My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.”

10. **Isaiah 41:10**

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

## Summary

### Scriptures Emphasizing It Is What God Does:

- **Isaiah 55:8-9** – God’s thoughts and ways are higher than ours.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – Salvation is by God’s grace, not our works.
- **Philippians 2:13** – God works in us to fulfill His purpose.
- **Romans 9:16** – God’s mercy is what matters, not our efforts.
- **2 Corinthians 3:5** – Our adequacy comes from God.
- **Jeremiah 10:23** – Our paths are directed by God.
- **John 15:5** – Without Christ, we can do nothing.
- **Psalm 127:1** – Our efforts are in vain without God’s blessing.
- **Isaiah 26:12** – God accomplishes our works.
- **Hebrews 12:2** – Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith.

### Scriptures Emphasizing Our Trust and Reliance in God:

- **Psalm 23:1-3** – The Lord is our shepherd, providing and guiding us.
- **Proverbs 3:5-6** – Trust in the Lord, not our own understanding.
- **Psalm 28:7** – The Lord is our strength and shield.
- **John 10:27-28** – We follow Christ, who grants us eternal life.
- **Isaiah 40:11** – God tends and leads His flock like a shepherd.
- **Psalm 56:3-4** – Trust in God, not fear.
- **1 Peter 5:7** – Cast your anxieties on God, for He cares for you.
- **Matthew 6:31-33** – Seek God’s kingdom first, and He will provide.
- **Psalm 62:5-8** – God is our rock and refuge; trust in Him.

- **Isaiah 41:10** – Do not fear, for God strengthens and helps us.
- THE CORRELATION**

## **Understanding the Correlation Between Our Works and God’s Will (Matthew 7:22-24)**

**Matthew 7:22-24 (NASB):** “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’ Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

### **1. The Difference Between Human Works and God-Ordained Works**

Jesus’ words in Matthew 7:22-24 highlight a stark contrast between works done in His name and those truly aligned with His will. The individuals mentioned had performed significant works—prophesying, casting out demons, and performing miracles—but their actions were ultimately deemed lawless because they were not rooted in genuine obedience to God.

**Ephesians 2:10 (NASB):** “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

This verse reveals that the works God desires from us are those He has prepared in advance for us to walk in. These works are not of our own making; rather, they are God’s design for our lives, reflecting His will and purpose. When we align our actions with these ordained works, we fulfill God’s will, rather than merely performing outwardly impressive deeds.

### **2. Obedience as the Foundation of Godly Works**

The passage in Matthew underscores that mere profession of faith without obedience to God’s commands is insufficient. Jesus calls for obedience, which is the hallmark of true discipleship.

**John 14:15 (NASB):** “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

Obedience to God's commandments is a clear demonstration of our love for Him. The works that God recognizes are those that flow from a heart of obedience and love, not merely external actions done for show or self-justification.

### **3. God's Sovereignty in Ordaining Our Works**

Our works must be understood within the context of God's sovereignty. It is God who ordains the works we are to perform, and it is through His Spirit that we are empowered to carry them out.

**Philippians 2:13 (NASB):** "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

This verse affirms that God Himself works within us to fulfill His purposes. Our ability to perform works that please God is not a matter of our own strength or wisdom; it is God who enables and directs our efforts in accordance with His will.

### **4. Faith and Works: A Symbiotic Relationship**

True faith inevitably produces works that are in alignment with God's will. Faith without corresponding works is dead, as James emphasizes.

**James 2:26 (NASB):** "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."

The works we do in faith are a natural outflow of a life transformed by God. These works are not a means to earn favor but a reflection of the faith that lives within us. When our works align with the works God has prepared, they serve as evidence of our faith and our relationship with Him.

Matthew 7:22-24 is a sobering reminder that not all works done in the name of God are recognized by Him. The key difference lies in obedience to God's will and walking in the works He has ordained. Our actions must be rooted in a genuine relationship with God, guided by His Word, and empowered by His Spirit. Only then can we be confident that the works we do are the works of God, fulfilling His purpose and bringing glory to His name.

## THE TESTING

### The Testing of Our Works by Fire

In addition to the importance of aligning our works with God's will, Scripture teaches that our works will be tested by fire to reveal their true nature and value.

**1 Corinthians 3:12-15 (NASB):** "Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

#### 1. The Foundation of Christ

Paul begins by emphasizing that Christ is the only foundation upon which we can build our lives and works. This is foundational to understanding why some works will survive the fire and others will not.

**1 Corinthians 3:11 (NASB):** "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Our works must be built upon the foundation of Christ, meaning they must be rooted in His teachings, His character, and His will. Works that are done in obedience to God and for His glory, rather than for our own benefit or recognition, are akin to building with "gold, silver, precious stones"—materials that can withstand fire.

#### 2. The Testing Process: Fire as a Metaphor

The "fire" mentioned in 1 Corinthians 3 symbolizes God's judgment, a process that will reveal the true nature of our works. This testing is not just about what we do but why and how we do it. Works that are done with impure motives or not in alignment with God's will are likened to "wood, hay, straw," which are easily consumed by fire.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NASB):** "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of

soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

God’s Word judges not only the outward appearance of our works but also the intentions behind them. It is this scrutiny that will determine whether our works are able to endure the fire of God’s judgment.

### **3. The Outcome of the Testing**

The passage in 1 Corinthians 3 makes it clear that not all works will survive the testing by fire. Those that do are rewarded, while those that do not result in loss. **However, it is important to note that even if a believer’s works are burned up, their salvation is secure, though they “will be saved, yet so as through fire” (1 Corinthians 3:15). This apparent contradiction between 1 Corinthians 3:15 and Matthew 7:22-24 will be addressed shortly.**

This emphasizes that while salvation is by grace through faith, **rewards in eternity are connected to the quality of our works on earth.**

### **4. Connection to Matthew 7:22-24**

In Matthew 7:22-24, Jesus condemns those who performed works in His name but were ultimately rejected because their works were not done in obedience to God’s will. Similarly, 1 Corinthians 3 teaches that only works rooted in Christ and aligned with God’s will can withstand the testing by fire. The “lawlessness” Jesus speaks of in Matthew is akin to building with materials that cannot survive the fire—actions done apart from true obedience and faith.

The testing of our works by fire, as described in 1 Corinthians 3, underscores the necessity of aligning our lives and actions with God’s will. Just as in Matthew 7:22-24, where Jesus rejects those who performed works without true obedience, the fire of God’s judgment will reveal the true quality of our works. Only those works that are built on the foundation of Christ and done in accordance with His will and purposes will survive, leading to eternal reward. This reinforces the importance of walking in the works God has prepared for us, ensuring they are of lasting value and bring glory to Him.

The correlation between **1 Corinthians 3:15** and **Matthew 7:22-24** hinges on the distinction between works that are tested and found lacking (but with the believer still being saved) and works that are utterly rejected due to their lawless nature.

### **1. Understanding 1 Corinthians 3:15:**

**1 Corinthians 3:15 (NASB):** "If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

This verse addresses believers whose works do not meet God's standards when tested by fire. While these works are burned up and the believer suffers loss (of reward), their salvation is still secure because their foundation is Christ. The key point here is that these individuals are genuinely saved, despite their failure to produce enduring works.

### **2. Understanding Matthew 7:22-24:**

**Matthew 7:22-24 (NASB):** "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

In contrast, this passage speaks to individuals who claim to have done significant works in Jesus' name but are ultimately rejected by Him. Jesus condemns them for practicing lawlessness, meaning their works were not done in genuine obedience to God's will or from a true relationship with Christ. The key phrase, "I never knew you," indicates that these individuals were never truly saved—they were never in a saving relationship with Christ, despite their outwardly impressive works.

### **3. Key Differences:**

- **Salvation Status:**
  - **1 Corinthians 3:15** addresses saved individuals whose works fail to endure the test of God's judgment but whose salvation remains intact because of their faith in Christ.
  - **Matthew 7:22-24** refers to individuals who, despite their works, were never truly saved. Their works were not rooted in genuine faith or obedience, leading to their rejection by Christ.

- **Nature of Works:**

- In **1 Corinthians 3:15**, the works are tested and found lacking, not because they were lawless, but perhaps because they were done with impure motives or lacked lasting spiritual value. However, these works do not disqualify the person from salvation.
- In **Matthew 7:22-24**, the works are identified as lawless, meaning they were not in alignment with God's will or done from a place of true submission to Christ. These works are completely rejected, along with the individual who performed them.

#### **4. Correlation and Distinction:**

The correlation between these passages lies in the judgment of works, but the distinction is critical:

- **1 Corinthians 3:15** shows that a believer's works, though potentially flawed or lacking in value, do not affect their salvation if their foundation is Christ.
- **Matthew 7:22-24** shows that outwardly impressive works cannot substitute for true faith and obedience. If one's works are lawless, it indicates a lack of genuine relationship with Christ, resulting in complete rejection.

**1 Corinthians 3:15** and **Matthew 7:22-24** both deal with the evaluation of works, but they speak to different groups. **1 Corinthians 3:15** offers assurance to believers that while their works may suffer loss, their salvation is secure in Christ. **Matthew 7:22-24** serves as a warning that mere works, without true faith and obedience, cannot save. This highlights the necessity of not just doing works, but ensuring that our works flow from a genuine relationship with God, grounded in obedience to His will.

### **THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION DOMINIONISM CONNECTION**

**Dominionism** is a theological perspective often associated with the **New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)**, which teaches that Christians are called to take dominion over various aspects of society, including government, education, media, and other cultural spheres. Adherents believe that by doing so, they can bring about God's kingdom on earth before Christ's

return. This perspective emphasizes the idea of establishing God's rule on earth through human agency, particularly through influential leadership and societal transformation.

## **1. Understanding Dominionism and NAR:**

**Dominionism:** This belief holds that Christians have a mandate to govern and influence all aspects of society in accordance with biblical principles. It often involves a focus on "reclaiming" or "redeeming" the world for Christ by placing Christians in positions of power and influence.

**New Apostolic Reformation (NAR):** The NAR is a loosely connected movement within some charismatic and Pentecostal circles that emphasizes the restoration of the offices of apostle and prophet in the church, alongside a strong emphasis on spiritual warfare, signs and wonders, and societal transformation. The NAR promotes the idea that these apostles and prophets are key to bringing about the dominion mandate.

## **2. Dominionism and Doing God's Will:**

**Focus on Earthly Power:** Dominionism, as advocated by NAR, can sometimes lead to a focus on achieving earthly power and influence as a primary means of doing God's will. This emphasis on dominion over societal structures can overshadow the biblical call to personal holiness, humility, and spiritual obedience.

**Contrast with Biblical Teaching:** In the Bible, doing God's will often emphasizes spiritual obedience, personal sanctification, and spreading the gospel rather than seizing societal control. For example, **Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)** commands believers to "make disciples of all the nations," which is a mission focused on spiritual transformation rather than political dominion.

**Potential Pitfalls:** A significant concern is that the Dominionism approach can lead to the pursuit of power and influence at the expense of true spiritual obedience and humility. This can be seen as parallel to the scenario described in **Matthew 7:22-24**, where individuals are rejected by Christ despite their claims of doing great works in His name. If the works done in the name of Dominionism are driven by a desire for power

rather than genuine obedience to God's will, they could be considered lawless in the eyes of Christ.

### **3. Correlation with Matthew 7:22-24:**

**Outward Works vs. Inward Obedience:** Just as in **Matthew 7:22-24**, where individuals are rejected by Christ despite their significant works because their actions were lawless, Dominionism can lead to an emphasis on outward works of power and influence without a corresponding inward submission to God's will. This can result in actions that, while appearing godly, are ultimately not aligned with God's true purposes.

**Risk of Lawlessness:** The risk within Dominionism, particularly as taught by the NAR, is that the pursuit of dominion can overshadow the need for true spiritual obedience and humility before God. If the focus shifts to establishing an earthly kingdom rather than advancing the spiritual kingdom of God through the gospel, there is a danger that such efforts could be considered lawless—lacking in genuine alignment with God's will.

### **4. Evaluating Works in Light of Scripture:**

**True Measure of Obedience:** The true measure of doing God's will is not in achieving dominion over society but in faithfully following Christ and living out His teachings. This includes humility, love, service, and proclaiming the gospel. **Micah 6:8 (NASB)** sums it up: "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

**Testing of Works:** As seen in **1 Corinthians 3:12-15**, our works will be tested by fire. Works that are built on the foundation of Christ and motivated by genuine obedience will endure, while those motivated by pride or a desire for power will be burned up. In the context of Dominionism, it is crucial that the works of influence and leadership be grounded in true submission to God's will, rather than in a desire for control or power.

### **Conclusion:**

Dominionism, as taught by the New Apostolic Reformation, emphasizes the pursuit of societal control as a means of doing God's will. However, this focus on earthly power must be carefully evaluated against the biblical

standard of genuine obedience and humility. **The danger lies in prioritizing dominion over spiritual faithfulness, leading to works that may ultimately be rejected by Christ as lawless. True alignment with God's will involves living out the teachings of Christ in humility, love, and service, with a focus on spiritual transformation rather than merely achieving earthly influence.**

I firmly believe that the pursuit of political power and authority, whether within the New Apostolic Reformation movement or in our current efforts to achieve righteous works through political means, contradicts the Great Commission that Jesus gave us. The issue is not with the righteous works themselves but with the intent and methods employed to achieve them.

For your consideration.

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**

## Passive Disengagement Versus Active Participation



In my recent series of posts discussing the Kingdom of God and how we are to [be in the world but not of it](#), some may assume I am advocating for passive disengagement from political systems. However, that is not my position, and I have clarified this on multiple occasions. I believe that the full counsel of God's Holy Word supports both active participation and passive disengagement, and that the choice ultimately rests with each Christian to decide individually. In this post, I will address the valid arguments and other considerations on this topic. This will be another post of considerable length, so please bear with me as I have deemed it necessary to cover the wider aspects involved.

### **RENDER UNTO CAESAR WHAT IS CAESAR'S**

In **Matthew 22:21** Jesus was addressing a complex situation with profound wisdom. The religious leaders attempted to trap Him by asking whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. If He had said "no," He could have been accused of rebellion against Roman authority; if He had said "yes," He could have been seen as compromising Jewish religious principles.

Jesus' response does not validate allegiance to political parties but rather draws a clear distinction between the obligations we have toward earthly authorities and our ultimate allegiance to God. By saying, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's," He acknowledges the legitimacy of civil obligations, such as paying taxes. However, by adding, "and unto God what is God's," He emphasizes that our highest allegiance belongs to God.

**The broader counsel of God's Word consistently upholds the principle that following God's will takes precedence over any earthly authority.** For instance, in Acts 5:29, Peter and the apostles state, "We must obey God rather than men" (NASB), highlighting that when there is a conflict between God's commands and human laws, God's will must come first. Moreover, Romans 13:1-7 instructs believers to be subject to governing authorities because they are established by God. However, this submission is not absolute; it is conditional upon the governing authority not commanding something that contradicts God's law.

## **The Context**

### **1. Context of Jesus' Statement**

In Matthew 22:15-22, the Pharisees and Herodians attempted to trap Jesus by asking whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. If Jesus had answered "no," He could have been accused of rebellion against Roman authority. If He had answered "yes," He risked alienating those who saw paying taxes to a pagan ruler as compromising their allegiance to God. Jesus' response, however, transcended the trap **by affirming that there are legitimate duties both to earthly governments and to God.**

### **2. Legitimacy of Earthly Authorities**

By saying, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's," Jesus acknowledged the legitimacy of earthly authorities and the obligations that come with them, such as paying taxes. This reflects the biblical principle found in Romans 13:1, "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God" (NASB). **Earthly authorities have a God-given role in maintaining order and justice, and Christians are called to respect and fulfill their obligations to these authorities as long as they do not conflict with God's commands.**

### **3. Supreme Allegiance to God**

However, Jesus' statement goes further by adding, "and unto God what is God's," indicating that while earthly authorities have their place, **our supreme allegiance is to God. This principle is consistent with the whole counsel of Scripture, which teaches that God's authority is above all earthly powers. When there is a conflict between the demands of earthly authorities and the commands of God, Christians must obey God first, as seen in Acts 5:29, where Peter and the apostles declare, "We must obey God rather than men" (NASB).**

### **4. Balancing Allegiance to Both**

Jesus' statement suggests that it is possible to fulfill obligations to both earthly authorities and God, but this must always be done with the understanding that God's authority is supreme. For example, a Christian can fulfill their civic duties, such as paying taxes or participating in the political process, while ensuring that these actions do not compromise their obedience to God's commands or their witness as followers of Christ.

Philippians 3:20 reminds believers that "our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (NASB).

**This heavenly citizenship informs how Christians engage with the world, recognizing that while they live under earthly governments, their ultimate loyalty is to God.**

### **5. Application of Jesus' Teaching**

In practical terms, this means that Christians can and should participate in societal and civic responsibilities, such as voting, serving in public office, or contributing to the common good, as long as these actions align with God's will. **However, if an earthly authority demands something that contradicts God's commands, Christians must prioritize their allegiance to God.**

### **Conclusion**

Jesus' teaching in Matthew 22:21 does indeed affirm that there are legitimate responsibilities to both earthly authorities and God, but with the clear understanding that God's authority is supreme. **Christians are called to navigate their dual citizenship—earthly and heavenly—by**

**fulfilling their civic duties in a manner that honours God and reflects their ultimate allegiance to Him.**

In essence, Jesus' statement in Matthew 22:21 is not an endorsement of political allegiance but a reminder that while we have duties in the world, our ultimate loyalty and obedience are due to God alone. **This principle aligns with the broader teaching of Scripture that God's will and His commandments are supreme, and they govern our actions above any human authority. Consequently, it is not always a one of the other situation, but rather it can be both, with the clear supreme consideration being given to our alignment with God's will and His commandments.**

## **THE DILEMMA**

In a political system where voters have the right to vote for a particular party and leader, one of which supports some biblical principles that correlate with God's will, while at the same time, the leader of this political party personifies a number of traits that a Christian should not hold, as opposed to another political party who opposes some biblical principals that correlate with God's will but may display fewer traits that a Christian should not hold, it places the Christian voter in a dilemma with regard to rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God. The question is: "How does the whole counsel of God's Holy Word deal with this dilemma?"

The dilemma is a challenging one for Christians who seek to live in accordance with God's will while participating in a political system. The whole counsel of God's Holy Word offers guidance on how to navigate such complex situations, emphasizing the importance of wisdom, discernment, and prioritizing one's ultimate allegiance to God.

### **1. Seeking God's Wisdom in Decision-Making**

James 1:5 provides a foundational principle for Christians facing difficult decisions: "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (NASB).

**When faced with a political dilemma where neither option fully aligns with biblical principles, the first step is to seek God's wisdom through prayer and the study of Scripture.**

## **2. Prioritizing God's Will**

Matthew 6:33 reminds believers of the importance of prioritizing God's kingdom: "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (NASB). **This verse emphasizes that a Christian's primary concern should be God's will and righteousness. When political choices involve compromise, believers must consider which option most aligns with God's purposes and advances His kingdom.**

## **3. Evaluating Leaders by Their Fruits**

Jesus teaches in Matthew 7:16-20 that "You will know them by their fruits... every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit" (NASB). **While a political leader may support policies that align with biblical principles, their personal character and actions also matter. Christians are called to evaluate leaders by their fruits, considering both their policies and their personal conduct in light of Scripture.**

## **4. The Limits of Earthly Politics**

Psalms 146:3-4 cautions against placing ultimate trust in human leaders: "Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (NASB). **This passage reminds believers that human leaders are fallible, and ultimate hope should not be placed in any political party or leader but in God alone.**

## **5. Living as Dual Citizens**

Philippians 3:20 declares, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (NASB). **Christians are citizens of heaven first, and their earthly citizenship is secondary. This heavenly perspective should guide how Christians engage in earthly politics, ensuring that their decisions reflect their ultimate loyalty to Christ.**

## **6. Choosing the Lesser of Two Evils?**

In situations where no political option perfectly aligns with biblical principles, some Christians may choose what they perceive as the lesser of two evils. This approach, while pragmatic, requires careful discernment and a clear conscience before God. Romans 14:23 states, "But he who doubts

is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin" (NASB). Therefore, any political choice must be made in faith, with the conviction that it best serves God's purposes.

## **7. Maintaining Christian Witness**

Finally, 1 Peter 2:12 exhorts believers to "Keep your behaviour excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation" (NASB). **In the political arena, Christians must consider how their choices and actions reflect on their witness for Christ. The way Christians engage in politics should glorify God and demonstrate His values to the world.**

### **Conclusion**

The whole counsel of God's Word calls Christians to prioritize God's will, seek His wisdom, and evaluate political decisions carefully, considering both the policies and character of leaders. **Ultimately, a Christian's allegiance is to God, and any political decision should be made with a heart that seeks to honour Him above all else. When facing dilemmas where no option seems fully righteous, believers must act in faith, trusting that God will guide their decisions as they seek to render unto God what is God's.**

## **THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS AND THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS**

The concept of choosing "the lesser of two evils" in decision-making, particularly in politics, can indeed raise concerns about whether such a choice implies that "the end justifies the means." However, these two ideas are not necessarily the same, and their implications differ based on the context and motivation behind the decision.

### **The End Justified the Means**

Another question we might ask is "Does our choice of selecting the lesser of two evils promote the end justifying the means?"

#### **1. Understanding "The End Justifies the Means"**

The phrase "the end justifies the means" is often associated with utilitarian ethics, where the morality of an action is judged solely by its outcomes, regardless of whether the actions themselves are inherently right or wrong.

This approach can lead to justifying morally questionable actions if they are believed to result in a desirable outcome.

## **2. Choosing the Lesser of Two Evils**

Choosing the lesser of two evils, especially in a political context, does not inherently mean that one is embracing a “the end justifies the means” mentality. **Instead, it often reflects the reality of living in a fallen world, where perfect options are rarely available, and difficult decisions must be made.** The choice is typically made with the intent of minimizing harm or promoting the greatest good in a situation where all available options are flawed.

For example, when voting in an election where all candidates or parties have significant moral shortcomings, a Christian might choose the candidate whose policies or actions are less likely to lead to outcomes that are contrary to biblical principles. **This choice is not necessarily about justifying the means (i.e., supporting a flawed candidate) but about seeking to limit negative consequences while recognizing the imperfect nature of the options.**

## **3. Biblical Guidance on Difficult Choices**

The Bible provides examples where individuals had to make difficult choices in complex situations. For instance, in Exodus 1:15-21, the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, chose to disobey Pharaoh’s command to kill Hebrew male infants, lying about the births to save lives. Their decision was not about justifying the means (lying) for the sake of the end (saving lives) but about choosing to do what they believed was right before God in a situation with no ideal options.

James 4:17 also offers guidance: “Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin” (NASB). **This verse emphasizes the importance of acting according to one’s understanding of what is right, even in challenging situations. The decision to choose the lesser of two evils can be seen as an attempt to act rightly in a context where no perfect choice is available.**

## **4. Moral Discernment and Accountability**

When deciding between two flawed options, Christians are called to

exercise moral discernment and seek God's guidance. The key difference between this and a "the end justifies the means" mentality lies in the heart and intention behind the decision. **A Christian making such a decision should do so with a sincere desire to honor God and minimize harm, rather than simply pursuing a desired outcome at any cost.**

Philippians 1:9-10 encourages believers to grow in love and discernment: "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ" (NASB). **This pursuit of discernment is crucial when facing morally complex decisions.**

### **Conclusion**

Utilizing the option of deciding the lesser of two evils is not necessarily the same as saying "the end justifies the means." **The former involves making the best possible choice in an imperfect situation, guided by a desire to do what is right before God, even when no option is ideal.** The latter, however, suggests a willingness to use any means to achieve a desired outcome, regardless of the morality of those means. **Christians facing such decisions should seek to act with integrity, wisdom, and a heart aligned with God's will, recognizing that their ultimate accountability is to Him.**

### **TO ABSTAIN**

The decision for a Christian to abstain from voting due to concerns about the policies and character deficiencies of all available candidates is a complex issue that requires careful consideration of biblical principles. The whole counsel of God's Word does provide guidance on this matter, addressing both the legitimacy of such a decision and the potential implications for one's responsibility to oppose evil and promote righteousness.

#### **1. Christian Freedom and Conscience**

Romans 14:5-6 emphasizes the importance of individual conscience in matters where Scripture does not provide explicit commands: "One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he

gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God" (NASB). **This passage suggests that in matters of conscience, including whether to vote, Christians have the freedom to make decisions based on their understanding of God's will, as long as their decision is made in faith and with a clear conscience.**

## **2. The Legitimacy of Abstaining from Voting**

If a Christian, after prayerful consideration, determines that neither candidate aligns sufficiently with biblical principles, and that voting for any of them would compromise their conscience, **abstaining from voting can be a valid decision.** Romans 14:23 reinforces the importance of acting according to one's faith: "But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin" (NASB). **If a Christian feels that participating in the vote would violate their conscience, then abstaining is a legitimate option.**

## **3. Responsibility to Oppose Evil**

**While abstaining from voting may be a valid choice, Christians are still called to oppose evil and promote justice in other ways.** James 4:17 warns, "Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin" (NASB). **If abstaining from voting is perceived as a passive acceptance of evil or injustice, then the Christian must consider other ways to actively oppose that which is contrary to God's will, whether through advocacy, prayer, or other forms of engagement.**

## **4. Historical Context: The Church and Slavery**

**The failure of some Christian churches to oppose slavery in the United States is a sobering example of the consequences of not standing against clear injustice.** Proverbs 31:8-9 instructs, "Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all the unfortunate. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and needy" (NASB). **This passage underscores the importance of speaking out against injustice and defending the oppressed. If abstaining from voting leads to a similar failure to oppose evil, then it could be seen as neglecting a biblical duty.**

## **5. Balancing the Decision with Active Opposition**

**If a Christian chooses not to vote, it is crucial that they find other ways to fulfill their responsibility to oppose evil and promote God's will.**

This could include involvement in community service, advocacy for biblical values, supporting righteous causes, or engaging in prayer for leaders and the nation. Romans 12:21 exhorts believers, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (NASB). **Even if a Christian abstains from voting, they should still actively seek to overcome evil in other meaningful ways.**

### **Conclusion**

Choosing not to vote due to the deficiencies in the policies and character of all candidates can be a valid decision if it is made with a clear conscience and in faith, according to the whole counsel of God's Word. However, Christians must also ensure that such a decision does not lead to passive acceptance of evil or neglect of their responsibility to promote righteousness and justice. While abstaining from voting might be an acceptable choice, it should be accompanied by a commitment to actively oppose evil and support God's will in other ways.

## **JESUS OVERCOMING THE WORLD**

Another question that we might ask is "When Jesus said that He had overcome the world, if we take Him at His word, would our participation in the political system via voting for the lesser of two evils not demonstrate lack of faith in what Jesus has already accomplished and further our reliance in what we can do to foster His Kingdom?"

When Jesus declared, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, NASB), He was affirming His victory over sin, death, and the powers of this world. This victory is complete and assured, giving believers confidence and peace regardless of the circumstances they face.

### **1. Understanding Jesus' Overcoming of the World**

Jesus' statement that He has "overcome the world" refers to His ultimate triumph over the forces of evil through His life, death, and resurrection. It assures believers that, despite the trials and tribulations they may face in

the world, Christ's victory is final, and they can live in the peace and assurance of His sovereignty.

**This does not mean, however, that Christians are to be passive or disengaged from the world. Rather, it calls believers to live in the light of Christ's victory, participating in the world with a confidence that is rooted in His triumph, not in human efforts alone.**

## **2. Faith and Participation in the World**

James 2:17 teaches, "Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself" (NASB). **This passage highlights that true faith is not merely a passive trust but is active and manifests in actions that reflect one's beliefs.** While Jesus' victory is complete, Christians are still called to be active participants in advancing God's kingdom on earth, through both spiritual and practical means.

**Participating in the political system, even when it involves voting for the lesser of two evils, can be seen as an expression of this active faith.** It is a way for Christians to engage with the world in a manner that seeks to promote justice, peace, and the values of God's kingdom, recognizing that while the world is fallen, they are called to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16).

## **3. Balancing Faith in Christ's Victory with Civic Responsibility**

Romans 13:1-2 instructs, "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves" (NASB). **This passage implies that participation in civic duties, such as voting, is part of a Christian's responsibility, recognizing that earthly authorities are ordained by God.**

**However, this participation should be done with the awareness that true hope and salvation come from Christ alone. While Christians engage in the political process, their ultimate trust is not in political outcomes but in the sovereignty of God and the victory of Christ.**

#### **4. Avoiding Reliance on Human Efforts Alone**

Proverbs 3:5-6 exhorts, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (NASB). This verse encourages believers to trust in God rather than relying solely on human efforts. While voting and participating in the political system are ways to seek the common good, Christians must do so with a heart that acknowledges God's sovereignty and relies on His guidance.

#### **5. The Role of Faith in Political Engagement**

**Christian political engagement should be an outflow of faith in Christ's victory, not a replacement for it.** The decision to vote for the lesser of two evils should be approached prayerfully, with the understanding that it is a way to influence the world while acknowledging that ultimate transformation comes through Christ, not through human institutions.

**The Bible also teaches that Christians are ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20), representing His kingdom in all areas of life, including politics. As ambassadors, Christians can participate in the political system without compromising their faith, using their influence to foster justice, mercy, and humility (Micah 6:8).**

#### **Conclusion**

Taking Jesus at His word that He has overcome the world should not lead to a disengagement from the world but rather to a confident and active participation in it, grounded in faith. Voting for the lesser of two evils, when done in faith and with reliance on God's sovereignty, does not demonstrate a lack of faith in what Jesus has accomplished. Instead, it can be a way of faithfully engaging with the world, while always recognizing that the true advancement of God's kingdom is ultimately in His hands, not ours.

#### **OUR PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

Another question we might ask is "How does our participation in the political system correlate with being in the world but not of the world or our rejection of God as our rightful King?"

This question is deeply rooted in biblical principles. Understanding these concepts through the lens of Scripture can help clarify how Christians are

to navigate their involvement in earthly governments while maintaining their ultimate allegiance to God.

### **1. In the World, But Not of the World**

Jesus prayed for His disciples, saying, "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one" (John 17:14-15, NASB). **This passage highlights the tension Christians live in: we are physically present in the world, but our values, identity, and ultimate allegiance are to God's kingdom.**

**Being "in the world but not of the world" means that while Christians engage with society, including its political systems, their actions should reflect the values of God's kingdom rather than conforming to the patterns of the world.** Romans 12:2 instructs, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (NASB). **Thus, political participation should be done with a mindset that seeks to reflect God's will, rather than merely following worldly norms or motivations.**

### **2. Rejecting God as King: The Example of Israel**

The concern about rejecting God as our rightful King by participating in the political system recalls the story of Israel asking for a human king in 1 Samuel 8. The people of Israel said to Samuel, "Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5, NASB). God responded to this request by saying to Samuel, "**They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them**" (1 Samuel 8:7, NASB). This request was problematic because it reflected a desire to be like other nations rather than to trust in God's unique leadership.

**The lesson from this story is that God's people must be careful not to place their ultimate trust in human leaders or political systems. However, this does not mean that all political participation is a rejection of God. The key difference lies in where one's ultimate trust and allegiance are placed. Christians can participate in**

**politics while still acknowledging God as their true King, provided they do not place their hope in human rulers above God.**

### **3. Participation in Politics as Ambassadors of Christ**

2 Corinthians 5:20 describes Christians as “ambassadors for Christ” (NASB). **As ambassadors, Christians represent God’s kingdom in all areas of life, including politics.** Their participation in the political system should therefore be a reflection of their commitment to God’s justice, mercy, and truth, not a replacement of God’s kingship with human authority.

**Christians engage in politics not to conform to the world’s ways but to bring God’s values into the public sphere.** Micah 6:8

summarizes what God requires: “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (NASB). **Political participation can be a way to seek justice and kindness, provided it is done with humility and a recognition of God’s sovereignty.**

### **4. Avoiding Idolatry in Political Engagement**

**A key danger in political participation is the potential for idolatry—placing one’s hope, trust, and identity in political leaders or parties instead of in God.** Psalm 146:3-4 warns, “Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation. His spirit departs, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (NASB). **Christians must guard against the temptation to idolize political figures or systems, remembering that salvation and true justice come from God alone.**

### **5. Balancing Political Engagement with Kingdom Allegiance**

Philippians 3:20 reminds Christians that “our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (NASB).

**While Christians have a role to play as citizens in earthly nations, our primary citizenship and allegiance are to the kingdom of God. Political engagement should be balanced with this understanding, ensuring that earthly politics does not overshadow or replace their commitment to Christ.**

## **Conclusion**

Participation in the political system is not inherently a rejection of God as our rightful King, as long as it is done with the understanding that Christians are “in the world but not of the world.” Political engagement should be seen as part of the Christian’s calling to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16), reflecting God’s kingdom values in the public sphere. However, it is crucial that this engagement does not lead to placing ultimate trust in human leaders or systems. Instead, Christians should participate in politics with the mindset of ambassadors for Christ, always maintaining their primary allegiance to God and His kingdom.

## **PERSONAL DECISION**

Another question we might ask is “Would it be correct to state that weighing the responsibilities and options of political participation is a personal decision between a man or woman and God?”

The answer to this question is “Yes”, based on the following considerations and criteria:

### **1. The Role of Conscience in Decision-Making**

The Bible emphasizes the importance of individual conscience in decision-making, especially in areas where Scripture does not provide explicit commands. Romans 14:5-6 says, “One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God” (NASB). **This passage underscores that believers are accountable to God for their personal decisions, and they must act in faith according to their convictions.**

### **2. Prayer and Seeking God’s Guidance**

In making decisions about political participation, Christians are encouraged to seek God’s wisdom and guidance. James 1:5 promises, “But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (NASB). **This indicates that believers should approach decisions, including those about political involvement, with prayer and a desire to align their actions with God’s will.**

### **3. Balancing Civic Responsibility and Allegiance to God**

While Christians have a responsibility to engage with society and fulfill their civic duties, they must do so in a way that honours their supreme allegiance to God. This involves carefully weighing the options and considering how each aligns with biblical principles. **Ultimately, the decision to participate in political processes, and how to do so, is a matter of personal conviction before God.**

### **4. Respecting Diverse Convictions Among Believers**

Romans 14:10, 12 reminds us, "But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God... So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God" (NASB). **This passage highlights that while Christians may arrive at different conclusions regarding political participation, each person is accountable to God for their decisions. It also calls for respect and understanding among believers, recognizing that God may lead individuals in different ways according to their circumstances and convictions.**

### **Conclusion**

Weighing the responsibilities and options of political participation is indeed a personal decision between a man or woman and God. It involves prayerful consideration, seeking God's guidance, and acting in accordance with one's conscience while recognizing that our ultimate accountability is to God.

### **THY KINGDOM COME**

When Jesus taught us to pray saying "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven", and to "seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added to you", it would appear to me that He is telling us that by His death and resurrection, He has conquered what the world seeks to ignore and that our ultimate trust and faith should be in what He has already accomplished rather than to focus on the less than ideal situations the world continually offers.

This thinking does align well with the teachings of Jesus and the overarching message of Scripture. Jesus indeed calls His followers to place their ultimate trust and faith in what He has accomplished through His death and resurrection, rather than being overly focused on the imperfect

and often problematic situations that the world offers. Let's take a closer look at this.

### **1. "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done"**

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10, NASB). This prayer expresses a longing for God's reign and will to be fully realized on earth, just as it is in heaven. It reflects a desire for God's perfect justice, peace, and righteousness to be manifested in our world.

**Praying for God's kingdom to come reminds us that our ultimate hope is in God's sovereign rule, not in the flawed systems and leaders of this world. It encourages believers to focus on God's purposes and to trust in His ultimate victory over sin and death, which was achieved through Jesus' death and resurrection.**

### **2. "Seek First the Kingdom of God"**

Jesus instructs His followers in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (NASB).

**This verse calls Christians to prioritize God's kingdom and righteousness above all else.** It is a directive to focus on what is eternal and divinely important rather than becoming preoccupied with worldly concerns, which are often temporary and imperfect.

**By seeking God's kingdom first, believers are reminded that their primary allegiance and focus should be on living according to God's will and trusting that He will provide for their needs. This mindset is consistent with a life of faith, where one's ultimate trust is placed in God rather than in worldly solutions or temporary fixes.**

### **3. Jesus' Victory Over the World**

Jesus' death and resurrection signify His victory over the powers of sin, death, and the world's brokenness. In John 16:33, Jesus assures His disciples, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (NASB). **This victory is the foundation of the believer's peace and confidence. It assures Christians that,**

**despite the trials and imperfections they face in this world, Jesus has already won the ultimate victory, and they are secure in Him.**

#### **4. Living with an Eternal Perspective**

This focus reflects an eternal perspective, which is central to the Christian faith. Colossians 3:2-3 exhorts believers, **“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (NASB)**. This perspective helps Christians navigate the challenges and imperfect situations of the world without losing sight of their true hope and purpose in Christ.

#### **Conclusion**

Jesus indeed calls us to focus on His kingdom and to place our ultimate trust in what He has already accomplished through His death and resurrection. While the world offers less-than-ideal situations, believers are encouraged to seek God’s kingdom first, trusting that He will guide and provide for them in all circumstances. **This focus on God’s sovereignty and the victory of Christ allows Christians to live with confidence and peace, knowing that their ultimate hope is secure in Him.**

#### **A DIVIDED NATION**

When a nation of believers and non-believers is divided against itself and we as Christians focus on the political process, identifying and prioritizing some biblical principles and ignoring others, rather than focusing on the eternal, the question could be asked: “Do we as Christians not aid Satan in getting us to take our eyes off of what should be foremost in our minds?”

**The answer to this question is associated with inherent risk.** When Christians become overly focused on the political process, identifying and prioritizing some biblical principles while ignoring others, and lose sight of the eternal truths of God’s kingdom, there is a risk of being distracted from what should be foremost in their minds—**God’s will, His kingdom, and their mission as followers of Christ**. This distraction can indeed play into Satan’s schemes, as he seeks to divert believers from their primary focus on Christ and His purposes.

#### **1. Division as a Tool of the Enemy**

Satan often uses division and distraction to weaken the Church and its witness in the world. Jesus warned that “Every kingdom divided against

itself is laid waste; and no city or house divided against itself will stand” (Matthew 12:25, NASB). **When Christians allow themselves to be divided, particularly over temporal matters such as politics, they can lose sight of their unity in Christ and the mission to spread the gospel.**

Ephesians 6:12 reminds us, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places” (NASB). **This verse emphasizes that the true battle Christians face is spiritual, not merely political or social. Satan’s goal is to turn believers’ attention away from this spiritual reality and toward worldly conflicts, thus weakening their spiritual effectiveness.**

## **2. The Danger of Selective Focus**

When Christians selectively focus on certain biblical principles while ignoring others, especially in the context of political engagement, **they can inadvertently compromise the fullness of the gospel message.** James 2:10 warns, “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all” (NASB). **This verse highlights the importance of embracing the entirety of God’s Word, rather than picking and choosing which parts to emphasize based on personal or political preferences.**

Focusing selectively on biblical principles can lead to a distorted witness to both believers and non-believers, as it may give the impression that some aspects of God’s truth are negotiable or less important. **This can diminish the Church’s credibility and hinder its ability to effectively communicate the gospel.**

## **3. Keeping an Eternal Perspective**

**Jesus repeatedly emphasized the importance of keeping an eternal perspective.** In Matthew 6:19-21, He teaches, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (NASB). **This passage encourages believers to focus on eternal matters—**

**God’s kingdom, righteousness, and the salvation of souls—rather than getting entangled in the temporal and often divisive matters of this world.**

When Christians focus on the eternal, they keep their eyes on Jesus, “the author and perfecter of faith” (Hebrews 12:2, NASB). This focus enables them to navigate the challenges of the world without losing sight of their true mission and purpose.

#### **4. Avoiding Satan’s Distractions**

**Satan’s strategy often involves distracting believers from their primary mission of proclaiming the gospel and living out God’s love and truth in the world.** 1 Peter 5:8 warns, “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (NASB). **Christians must be vigilant in recognizing when they are being drawn into distractions that pull them away from their primary focus on Christ and His kingdom.**

#### **Conclusion**

When Christians become overly focused on the political process and selectively apply biblical principles, they risk aiding Satan in his goal of diverting their attention from what should be foremost in their minds—God’s eternal purposes and their mission as His followers. **While engaging in the political process is not inherently wrong, it is crucial that believers maintain an eternal perspective, ensuring that their ultimate allegiance and focus remain on God’s kingdom and His will. By doing so, they can avoid the enemy’s distractions and stay faithful to their calling in Christ.**

#### **THE GREAT COMMISSION**

The Great Commission, as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, instructs Christians to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (NASB). **This command emphasizes the central mission of Christians: to spread the gospel and make disciples of all nations.**

In contrast, the time, financial backing and effort Christians expend in the political process in North America can sometimes seem at cross purposes

with this mission. Here are several ways in which political engagement might intersect with, or potentially distract from, the Great Commission:

### **1. Prioritizing Political Engagement Over Evangelism**

If Christians prioritize political engagement to the extent that it overshadows their commitment to evangelism and discipleship, they risk deviating from their primary mission. **The Great Commission focuses on spiritual transformation and the expansion of God's kingdom through preaching the gospel and making disciples, rather than political reform.**

**Example:** When political debates or campaigns consume a significant portion of a Christian's time and energy, it may reduce their capacity to engage in activities directly related to spreading the gospel or disciplining new believers.

### **2. Divisive Impact on Christian Witness**

Political involvement can sometimes lead to division among believers. Differences in political opinions and affiliations might create conflict within the Church, weakening its unity and witness. Jesus prayed for the unity of His followers in John 17:21, "that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me" (NASB). **Disunity within the Church can undermine its credibility and effectiveness in fulfilling the Great Commission.**

**Example:** When Christians become embroiled in political arguments, it may alienate non-believers who are interested in hearing the gospel but are put off by the contentious behaviour of Christians.

### **3. Potential for Distraction from the Eternal Mission**

The political process, with its focus on temporal issues and solutions, can divert attention from the eternal aspects of the Great Commission. While engaging in political activities is part of civic responsibility, **it should not replace the central focus on evangelism and discipleship.**

**Example:** Engaging in political advocacy or campaigning can become a distraction if it leads Christians to spend less time on prayer, Bible study,

and sharing their faith, which are crucial aspects of living out the Great Commission.

#### **4. The Risk of Misplacing Hope**

Christians are called to place their hope and trust in God's kingdom rather than in political systems or leaders. While participating in the political process is legitimate, it should not replace or overshadow the hope Christians have in God's ultimate plan. Jesus said in John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world" (NASB). **This reinforces the idea that the kingdom of God transcends earthly political systems and should be the primary focus of Christian hope and mission.**

**Example:** Excessive focus on political outcomes might lead to misplaced hope in political solutions rather than in the transformative power of the gospel and the coming of God's kingdom.

#### **5. Balancing Civic Engagement with the Great Commission**

Engaging in the political process can be part of a Christian's witness if done in a manner that reflects biblical values and priorities. Christians can participate in politics while keeping the Great Commission central by:

- **Maintaining a Gospel-Centered Perspective:** Ensuring that political involvement does not overshadow or conflict with efforts to share the gospel and make disciples.
- **Promoting Unity and Love:** Engaging in political discourse in ways that build bridges rather than create divisions, reflecting the love and unity of Christ.
- **Keeping an Eternal Focus:** Recognizing that political efforts are temporary, while the mission to make disciples has eternal significance.

#### **Conclusion**

The Great Commission and political engagement are not necessarily at cross purposes, but they require careful balance. Christians must ensure that their political involvement does not detract from their primary mission of evangelism and discipleship. By prioritizing the Great Commission and integrating their political participation in a way that aligns with the gospel, Christians can fulfill their civic responsibilities while staying true to their ultimate calling in Christ.

## **FINAL COMMENT**

**Overlooking the clear and present dangers involved in evaluating and deciding on this critical topic would be both dishonest and reckless. These dangers are evident and widespread within many parts of the visible Christian Church today. My hope and prayer are that this post offers clarity in making these decisions and that, above all, God's will and purposes remain central to the body of Christ.**

**Worthy is the Lamb! Blessings!**