



CAPITOL
ministries®

NOVEMBER 6, 2023

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

*Clarifying the Continual
Confusion About the
Separation of Church
and State*..... 2

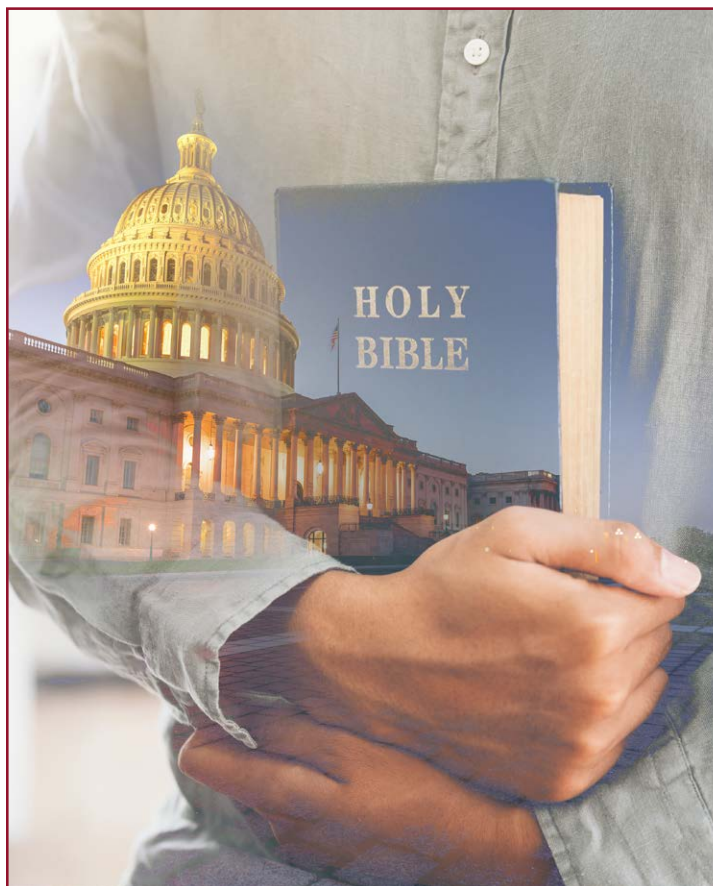
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Ministry Versus Political Activism



Since the mid-1970s Evangelicals have sought to re-enter the political arena in response to a morally declining America. Their sincere desires were to stop the erosion of our Christian heritage and return the nation to our former values. In this quest, perhaps inadvertently, well-meaning Evangelical leaders attempted to co-opt the Church into an organization of political activism.

This subtle attempt to change the primary, God-ordained purpose of the church from a soul-winning, disciple-making organism into a nation-saving, vote-making organization met with mixed results.

Continued next page

CURRENT AND
FORMER GOVERNORS

- Phil Bryant MS
- Mike Dunleavy AK
- Greg Gianforte MT
- Sarah Huckabee Sanders AR
- Sonny Perdue GA
- Rick Perry TX
- Jim Pillen NE
- Tate Reeves MS
- Kim Reynolds IA
- Kevin Stitt OK
- Scott Walker WI
- Glenn Youngkin VA

SENATORS

- Marsha Blackburn TN
- Mike Braun IN
- Katie Britt AL
- Ted Budd NC
- Bill Cassidy LA
- Kevin Cramer ND
- Steven Daines MT
- Joni Ernst IA
- William Hagerty TN
- Cindy Hyde-Smith MS
- James Lankford OK
- Markwayne Mullin OK
- Mike Rounds SD
- Tim Scott SC
- John Thune SD

REPRESENTATIVES

- Mark Alford MO
- Robert Aderholt AL
- Rick Allen GA
- Don Bacon NE
- Michael Bost IL
- Josh Brecheen OK
- Michael Conaway TX
- Rick Crawford AR
- Jake Elkey TX
- Ron Estes KS
- Louie Gohmert TX
- Glenn Grothman WI
- Kevin Hern OK
- Richard Hudson NC
- Bill Huizenga MI
- Bill Johnson OH
- Dusty Johnson SD
- Jim Jordan OH
- Doug Lamborn CO
- Nathaniel Moran TX
- Kevin McCarthy CA
- Gary Palmer AL
- August Pfluger TX
- Bill Posey FL
- Cathy McMorris Rodgers WA
- David Rouzer NC
- John Rutherford FL
- Glenn Thompson PA
- Tim Walberg MI
- Randy Weber TX
- Daniel Webster FL
- Bruce Westerman AR
- Brian Williams NY
- Roger Williams TX
- Joe Wilson SC
- Rob Wittman VA
- Steve Womack AR
- Rudy Yakym IN
- Ted Yoho FL

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

- Governors:** Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom
- Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff:** Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom
- Senate Members:** Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served
- House Members:** Thursdays 8am, AG Hearing Rm., Longworth 1302, hot breakfast served

The views expressed in each Bible Study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study sponsor.



FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

Clarifying the Continual Confusion About the Separation of Church and State

When trying to understand the concept of separation of Church and State, the secularist begins with our nation’s historical documents.

Some Christians begin there too, but Capitol Ministries believes they are mistaken.

When trying to determine the right course of action or when developing a position on any issue, the Christian should always begin with the Bible. It is the believer’s authority on all things.

And in turning to the Bible on this issue, Scripture makes it abundantly clear that there should be an *institutional* separation of Church and State, but not an *influential* separation. This is an important distinction to make; the two are vastly different.

Seminal Scripture that illustrates this biblical distinction is found Matthew 22:21 wherein Jesus is asked a trick question—whether it was lawful for Israelites to pay taxes to Caesar:

And He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and render to God the things that are God’s.”

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When Capitol Ministries was born in 1996, one of our primary objectives was, and remains, to provide biblical clarity to this matter. Our ministry has always believed that it is much more efficient and effective for the sake of both the Church and the nation, for the Church to remain intent on its God-ordained soul-winning and disciple-making objectives. Our purpose has been to manufacture present and future political leaders—sending mature-in-Christ public servants into office and into government leadership! It follows that a mature-in-Christ public servant (an insider) can effect much more biblically-based change than can a member of the Church, inexperienced in the ways of the State (an outsider), who lobbies the State for change. In stating this intention, these objectives in no way imply any theocratic objective:

The Bible is clear regarding God’s desire in the new covenant that an institutional separation of Church from the State exist, but institutional separation does not imply influential separation.

Grown by the discipleship efforts of the Church, public servants are to serve the institution of the State with no eye for co-optation. (I should add a personal note here for the sake of secularists who tend to assume that Christian public servants have a desire to make America into a theocracy. In over 20 years of working with Christians in office, I have yet to meet one who harbors this motive.)

Read on, my friend.

Ralph Drollinger



I. INTRODUCTION

The Bible clearly teaches that today there is to be an *institutional* separation of Church and State. To think otherwise is to believe in a theocratic or sacerdotal form of government. What the Bible does not teach—and what the secularist would like to say the Constitution supports—is an *influential* separation of Church and State. Clearly, however, such thinking is not supported in the Constitution or the Scriptures.

The State is dependent on godly leaders, but the State is not in the business of manufacturing them; that is the role of the Church.

When the Church concentrates its efforts on evangelizing and discipling office holders, those officeholders who possess a Christian worldview are positioned to effect much change!

It follows then, that the emphasis of the historic Religious Right movement—attempting to redefine God’s mandate for the Church—is fundamentally flawed and, therefore, will always remain largely ineffective. We cannot expect the Church to be an effective, well-oiled political machine, but we can expect the Church to be an effective, well-oiled disciple-maker of those who serve the State.

II. A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Evangelicals reentered the political arena incorrectly in the mid-1970s. But how is it that they ever left it in the first place—especially since their forefathers, the Puritans, were the very instruments and foundation upon

which the State was conceived and implemented?

The Evangelical pullout occurred in the 1920s and 30s in response to the authority of God’s Word, the Bible, coming under critical attack. How are these matters related?

In the late nineteenth century, America’s conservative Protestant seminaries experienced the incursion of theological higher criticism propagated by a seminary in Tubingen, Germany. Theologically speaking, German Higher Criticism seriously questioned the infallibility, inerrancy, and inspiration of the ancient manuscript evidences that comprise the basis of all Bible translations. There was a criticism of the source documents that compose the ancient manuscript evidences used to translate the Bible into modern-day existing languages. Before Tubingen, throughout all of Church history, the matter of the integrity of the source documents of the Scriptures had never been on the table for debate.

In fact, during the Reformation in their great debate with the Council of Trent—as to whether salvation was by faith alone in Christ alone via God’s grace alone—both Luther and Calvin deemed the Scriptures as accurate, reliable, and authoritative for all matters of faith and practice.

**In 1930s America,
that all changed.**

Theologically speaking, German Higher Criticism entered the American Church, and many of the mainline Protestant denomination seminaries

VERSE OF THE WEEK

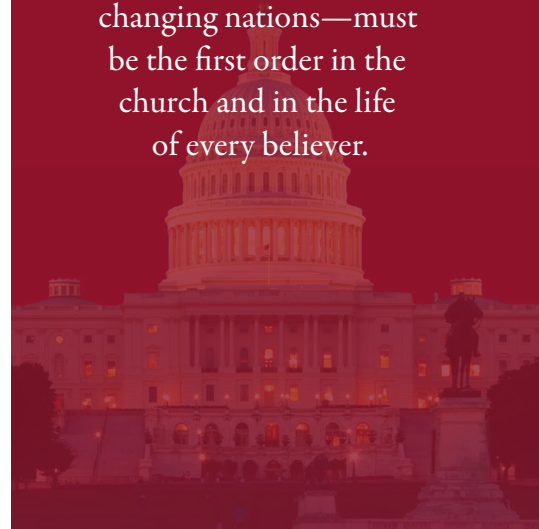


Philippians 1:18

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice.



Winning and building people in Christ—not changing nations—must be the first order in the church and in the life of every believer.





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At that time, Israel was a Theocracy—a government in which the priests ruled in the name of God. The Bible calls Israel *a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* (Exodus 19:6–7).

Therefore, when Jesus made that statement, He was proclaiming a huge new distinction to his listeners, that something was coming for the approaching Church Age that was quite different from the Theocracy of Old Testament (OT) Israel.

This passage anchors the concept of *institutional* separation of Civil Government from God’s ordained Institution of the Church. Other prominent NT passages that support this are Romans 13:1–8 and I Peter 2:13–14.

Many Evangelicals are not clear on this point of institutional separation.

For Evangelicals to state, as they often do, that there is no mention of separation of Church and State in the American Constitution gives rise to secular fear that American Evangelicals in office are plotting a Theocracy.

Regardless of what one may or may not think the U.S. Constitution says about this matter, the NT remains and has always been crystal clear: Institutional separation is biblical.

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fell prey to the rationalistic thinking of the movement. In essence, the purveyors of what would later become known as Theological Liberalism held to a belief that God inspired not all of Scripture. Additionally, reinterpreted from the literal text of Scripture were man’s understanding of Jesus Christ and the gospel. No longer was the kernel of the gospel that man was sinful and in need of a Savior, but in its place, Jesus had been reduced to being a good, humble role model—Someone Who portrayed a good lifestyle. Jesus was no longer salvific in their way of thinking, merely One we should emulate, but nothing more. An accurate depiction, the retail name of Theological Liberalism was the Social Gospel movement that gutted the revealed gospel of Scripture, which says, *But God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (Romans 5:8).

The gospel of the Scripture prior to the incursion of Theological Liberalism is intensely personal, driving the sinner toward repentance and the recognition of his desperate need of a Savior and Lord. Conversely, the Social Gospel became political, searching for sweeping answers for the betterment of mankind, *often through politically based means*. In theological circles, this chasm, which became known as the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy, would divide the Protestant Church in America and eventually throughout the world.

III. THE MANIFESTATION IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

The Fundamentalists, later known more so as Evangelicals, took great of-

fense to the Modernist, Social Gospel movement because then as now, it redefines the biblically explicit person and work of Jesus Christ. A good way to discern the difference today is this: Fundamentalists have at their heart the primary task of defending the faith, whereas Evangelicals, to proclaim the good news of Christ. Fundamentalists are certainly gospel focused and evangelistic, but tend to historically be those who adamantly fight against heresy more than do Evangelicals.

Responding to the defection of many mainline denominations, the Fundamentalists separated their fellowship from Theological Liberals. They left liberal churches, seminaries, colleges, and publishing houses. Later they would build new ones to recreate the vast infrastructure that conservative American Protestantism had enjoyed, the very engine that to this point had driven American culture.

In the meantime, the Social Gospel movement, in carrying out its unbiblical interpretation of Christ’s mission, became out of necessity increasingly political. The movement became heavily involved in the political process in order to achieve its perception of mission. Accordingly, as we could imagine and to the point under discussion in this Bible study,

As fundamentalists parted company with theological liberalism, they parted company with American politics.

This tragic result ended the historic, foundational involvement of Bible-



teaching pastors often being the very men who held public office in the formative years of American history. The godly influence in American government soon evaporated and was replaced by a Social Gospel narrative.

IV. COMPARING THE METHODOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL GOSPEL MOVEMENT TO THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT

Fast-forward 40 years. Theologically speaking, the decade of 1970 would be titled The Evangelical Resurgence. Rather than cite examples of this revitalization, more important to the point is to juxtapose the huge, numeric groundswell in the Evangelical camp with the rapid moral decline in the nation. These parallel contrasting factors provide an acute realization as to why (what would later be titled) the Religious Right movement arose and moved posthaste back into the American political arena.

In the 1920s and 30s, out of sincere motives for separating for the sake of the purity of the gospel message, Fundamentalists and Evangelicals had abandoned the arena of political involvement and civil influence. They were not about to commingle with a new, ill-informed “Christianity” that had invaded their space. The Social Gospellers invaded the political arena for reasons of missional necessity. As Theological Liberals gained ground, Theological Conservatives lost ground.

Then 40 years later, Fundamentalists and Evangelicals were fighting mad that the America they knew was in moral decline and dominated by Theological and Political Liberalism.

The Evangelical Resurgence was now underway, and they hoped that reengaging and affecting the political arena “for Christ” would preserve a nation from its rapid moral disintegration.

As Evangelicals moved back into the political arena, they did so with a right understanding of biblical doctrine, especially concerning Christ and personal salvation. Their doctrine was biblical in comparison to the encroachment of Theological Liberalism some 50 years earlier. The unadulterated gospel, encapsulated in the book of Romans, was at the heart of the Evangelical Resurgence: we are *dead in our transgressions* [but God] *made us alive together with Christ* ... (Ephesians 2:5). The purveyors of the Social Gospel had long ago abandoned this message.

Outstanding, however, in the zeal of the reentry of the Religious Right (which one might say, was the political arm of the Evangelical Resurgence) was the absence of a major biblical ingredient to any ministry endeavor that is desirous of God’s blessing. Whereas Fundamentalists and Evangelicals have long held to the gospel as defined and revealed by the Scriptures, their methodology for ministry—especially as it relates to their methodology in the political arena—was not informed by the Bible. In truth, the Bible is instructive regarding both.

The religious right’s message was right, but their methodology was wrong.

But make no mistake, institutional separation does not mean there should be influential separation, as is postulated by the secularists.

Whereas the believer should hold to institutional separation, he must reject the secular notion of influential separation.

The reason the secularist is wrong on influential separation is because righteousness in the lives of individuals—both in a nation’s citizens and its leaders—is necessary for good governance, and without a strong Church that influences and makes disciples, the State soon goes wayward due to the sinfulness of its leaders.

The Church must influence Civil Government. Consider these biblical reasons:

Proverbs 29:2: *When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, But when a wicked man rules, people groan.*

Proverbs 28:12: *When the righteous triumph, there is great glory, but when the wicked rise, men hide themselves.*

Proverbs 14:34 states summarily, *Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.*

Proverbs has much to say about the necessity of virtuous governmental leaders for creating and maintaining a civil and just society.

To accommodate that need,

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the Church must be in the business of manufacturing righteous leaders through evangelism and discipleship at all levels of their career paths. As a matter of primacy, the Church must influence the State, or the State will eventually die.

Conclusively, believers must be clear on this subject: we stand for institutional separation, lest the secularist mistakenly conclude we have some kind of theocratic motives in the back of our heads. But unlike the secularist, the believer is passionate about the necessity of the Church influencing the State.

Who Should Influence the Government?

There are many who will not accept arguments based upon Scripture that the Church should influence government, as they do not recognize the Bible as authoritative.

Those individuals may consider that the United States was established so that all citizens have access to their elected leaders and possess opportunities to influence them.

One memorable influencer in recent times is renowned atheist Madalyn Murray O’Hair who became famously known for influencing the State to adopt her personal belief system that prayer should be

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One example of this right message among many is found in Philippians chapter 1, where Paul is writing near the end of his ministry. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul gives the reader wonderful insights into biblically revealed ministry methodology. As Paul writes, he is physically chained to the Praetorian Guard, Caesar’s most elite protectors. This means if he was not in Caesar’s household, he was surely next door to it. Notice in verse 18 what Paul says,

“I have finally arrived at the doorstep of the world’s political leaders. Now I will tell them what needs to change in the empire!”

Paul does not say that. What he does say is:

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice.

The context of Paul’s remarks pertains to another subject, but the insight into his and our priority of ministry is refreshingly clear:

Winning and building people in Christ—not changing nations—must be the first order in the church and in the life of every believer.

That was Paul’s clear priority, and it should be ours too:

“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” (Matthew 28:19–20).

This passage is the Great Commission! Like Paul, the Church now is mandated to be about *making disciples!*

Seek first His kingdom states Jesus in Matthew 6:33. After all, *if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come* (2 Corinthians 5:17). If it is true that people’s lives change for the better when they come to Christ, then should not that transformation be the first priority of the institution of the Church and the individuals in the Church? Such was not the priority of the Church during the Evangelical Resurgence/Religious Right movement of the 1970s. Rather, the priority and methodology of Evangelicals was to attempt to transform the Church into a political activist organization and change the laws of America. But God calls His Church and His followers to change hearts—knowing that “good laws come from good hearts” (a loose translation of a quotation from William Penn).

V. THE CLARIFYING POINT

By employing worldly methodologies for political influence, the Church reduced itself to nothing more than a political pressure group—whereas, biblically ordained by God, the Church is to proclaim freedom from trespasses and sin and proclaim new life in Christ! Bad politicians, political corruption, and ill-based laws all change when people come to know the living Christ. Therein lies the pri-



mary methodology of God's people. This biblically based priority then leads to evangelizing and discipling state leaders.

Send a mature believer into the public arena, and as an insider he or she will effect change to a much greater degree than will an outsider.

Unfortunately, because of a faulty methodology since the 1970s, the Church has been less than effective in its attempts to change the direction of America. It has spent its seed on the sidewalk. It should be no wonder that in its ill-fated attempt to morph its purpose, the Church has increasingly missed its calling and mission. And in becoming a political action group, the Church has vastly discounted its credibility in the process.

VI. SUMMARY

The Church needs to be biblical in both its message and methodology. To muddle one is tragic (the Religious Right); to muddle both is catastrophic (historic Theological Liberalism). Christians involved in the wrong message and/or methodology on earth render themselves useless and ineffective in God's eyes.

First Timothy 2:1–4 is an apt summary of this study. When believers prioritize praying evangelistically for and evangelizing kings and all who are in authority, God promises the following: *so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity* (v. 2).

Wise is the believing officeholder who commits himself to these biblically revealed purposes and priorities.

Maturing public servants in Christ is the most efficient way for the church to change the direction of a nation.

The Church is at its best when it equips the insiders to do the changing. Mature believers in office are in a more powerful position to effect change than are believers on the outside. Disciple public servants today! God blesses men and women who act on clear, biblically-based priorities.

banned in all public schools.

Today, armies of lobbyists flood Capitol Hill representing experts and leaders in business, industry, ranching, banking, nonprofit agencies, farming, media, the environment, animal rights, and minority groups, among many, many others.

These professional influencers bombard elected officials with petitions, asking for funding, requesting new laws, pleading for tax relief, begging for fewer regulations and any number of other appeals.

And it is their constitutional right to do so.

It is then the job of elected leaders to use their own reasoning and sound judgment to consider outside influence when they make final decisions.

Why would the Church, which is in a similar sense, lobbyist for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, not be accorded the same privilege?





FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

My Ways Are Not Your Ways

God says that He honors His Word (cf. Psalm 19 and 119). He also says that His Word does not return void (Isaiah 55:11). He also says that it is living and active (Hebrews 4:12). He also says that He uses it via His Bible teachers to mature His called-out ones (cf. Romans 10:15; Hebrews 12:2; Ephesians 4:12-13).

Combining all these Bible truths, is it far-fetched for the Church—as its foremost priority and responsibility—to send Bible teachers into the seats of civil Government in order to change civil government? Will not God draw His called out ones into the seats of civil government in order to be matured in Christ through the Bible teacher?

Such is counter-intuitive to and transcendent of secular political science. But is this not the biblical-revealed formula for changing a nation?

ESTABLISHED MINISTRIES

UNITED STATES

- Albany New York
Annapolis Maryland
Atlanta Georgia
Augusta Maine
Austin Texas
Bismarck North Dakota
Boise Idaho
Boston Massachusetts
Denver Colorado
Dover Delaware
Carson City Nevada
Charleston West Virginia
Cheyenne Wyoming
Columbia South Carolina
Columbus Ohio
Concord New Hampshire
Des Moines Iowa
Hartford Connecticut
Harrisburg Pennsylvania
Helena Montana
Honolulu Hawaii
Jefferson City Missouri
Juneau Alaska
Lansing Michigan
Lincoln Nebraska
Little Rock Arkansas
Madison Wisconsin
Montgomery Alabama
Montpelier Vermont
Nashville Tennessee
Oklahoma City Oklahoma
Olympia Washington
Phoenix Arizona
Providence Rhode Island
Raleigh North Carolina
Richmond Virginia
Sacramento California
Salem Oregon
Santa Fe New Mexico
Springfield Illinois
Topeka Kansas
Trenton New Jersey

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Bangui Central African Republic
San Jose Costa Rica
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Quito Ecuador
Malabo Equatorial Guinea
Mbabane Eswatini
Addis Ababa Ethiopia
Brussels European Parliament
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Libreville Gabon
Accra Ghana
Conakry Guinea
Tegucigalpa Honduras
Rome Italy
Nairobi Kenya
Monrovia Liberia
Antananarivo Madagascar
Lilongwe Malawi
Mexico City Mexico
Chisinau Moldova
Maputo Mozambique
Nauru
Abuja Nigeria
Port Moresby Papua New Guinea
Brazzaville Republic of the Congo
Freetown Sierra Leone
Honiana Solomon Islands
Pretoria South Africa
Dodoma Tanzania
Nuku'alofa Tonga
Kyiv Ukraine
Washington, D.C. USA
Montevideo Uruguay
Port Vila Vanuatu
Lusaka Zambia
Harare Zimbabwe



Making Disciples of Jesus Christ in the Political Arena Throughout the World



Capitol Ministries provides Bible studies, evangelism, and discipleship to political leaders. Founded in 1996, Capitol Ministries has started ongoing ministries in more than forty U.S. state Capitols and dozens of foreign federal Capitols.

Capitol Ministries

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