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U.S. Representative, 10th District,
Florida

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Understanding *the* Separation of Church *and* State



America's greatest asset is godly leaders both in the Church and in Government.

WHEN JESUS SAID, “*render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s*” (Matthew 22:21), He was proclaiming a huge new distinction, something quite different for the coming Church Age, relative to the past with OT Israel. This passage, among other NT passages, represents the biblical basis of *institutional* separation of civil government from God’s ordained Institution of the Church. (But I must be careful to add here right up front, lest you misunderstand what I am saying, that *institutional* separation does not imply *influential* separation, as is postured by many secularists today.)

Unlike the preceding biblical epoch of OT Israel where God’s people and the State were one — a theocracy or sacerdotal (“priestly or ecclesiastical”) system of governance — in the age to come, Jesus expects the two institutions to be differentiated in structure, purpose and leadership.

It follows that America’s greatest resource is leaders in both institutions who are men and women of character. Read on.

Ralph Drollinger

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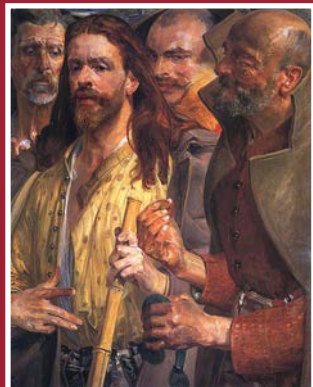
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Weekly Bible Studies

CABINET: 7:00 AM Wednesdays Mornings. Location Undisclosed. *Light Refreshments Served.*

SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, Rotating Offices of Senators. *Hot Breakfast Served.*

HOUSE: Capitol H324: Monday or Tuesday Evenings after First Votes Back. *Dinner Served.*



Malczewski Jacek, Render unto Caesar.

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 U.S. Constitution supports — is an *influential* separation of Church and State. Clearly however such thinking is not supported in the Constitution or the Scriptures.

“*Render unto Caesar*” represents one of the biblical passages that supports the idea of *institutional* separation. Let us examine this more closely from a historical perspective.

As primitive Christianity began as recorded in the book of Acts the separation of the Church from the State of Rome clearly existed. It was not until the fourth century A.D., when Constantine co-opted Christianity as the State religion (in his attempt to unify the vast and diverse Roman Empire), that the clearly, previously existing, separation between the two institutions disappeared. Tragically, this lack of separation occurs even during the Post-Reformation period! Luther, Zwingli and Calvin practiced a sacerdotal societal structure, versus a *composite* one per the clear teaching of the NT (cf., Matthew 20:20-22; Romans 13:1-8; 1 Peter 2:13-14). In that much of the reformer’s emphasis on doctrinal correction of heresy related to soteriology (the doctrine of Salvation) no surgical exercise was

performed relative to the aberrant earlier wedding of Church and State.

Important to this study is the thought that in the NT era — save the first three centuries of it — a theocratic, sacerdotal system has existed in most countries of the world. Historically, it is not until the American experiment in government, in which our founding fathers in reaction to sacerdotal England (wherein the Church of England and the State of England still remain one in the same), sought a pragmatic solution to separate themselves from a forced religious belief system incumbent on one being born in England.

If biblically speaking, the Church and State are to be separate institutions, does that suggest, as the secularist would postulate, a total disenfranchisement of the Church from the State — i.e. an *influential* separation as well? Is that the extrapolation Christ would desire from the aforementioned text of Matthew 22:21? No!

As we will see from this study, the Institution of the State is quite dependent on the existence of a strong and healthy Institution of the Church (which it does not control) to build men and women in *righteousness* for service in government.

**WITHOUT A STRONG
CHURCH THAT MAKES
DISCIPLES, THE STATE SOON
GOES WAYWARD DUE TO
THE SINFULNESS OF ITS
LEADERS.**



Since this is such a vital need and concern of the State itself, and the State's leadership, what more so and specifically does the book of Proverbs state about the absolute need for *righteous* governmental leaders? Let us turn our attention in pursuit of the answer to that question.

II. UNDERSTANDING THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

Every statesman needs to take a lesson from Proverbs 14:34. Here in this important Proverb is a nationalistic, (versus personal) bestowal of truth. Here is a sound political maxim:

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

Righteousness in the lives of individuals — both in a country's citizens and leaders — is the superior virtue over all others. It is *a nation's* number one national resource! The writer of Proverbs is stating that it is the one ingredient that assures the *exaltation* of *a nation*.

It is not the international trade or the gross domestic product, nor is it the presence of natural resources that is most fundamental to the *exaltation* of *a nation*. Rather, it is the *righteousness* of *a nation's* individuals that is the greatest resource — and the greatest commodity that a nation needs to manufacture!

The same principles which build individuals in *righteousness* (as expounded by the Word of God)

are the same principles, wherein multiplied by and through individuals, that build a *nation*. It is when a *nation* is impregnated with highly principled individuals that it gains well-being.

Given this cut-to-the-chase analysis of our greatest need, the question then quickly becomes one of how *righteousness* is formed in the lives of individuals. Having said that, therein exists, in terms of serving the Institution of the State, the absolutely critical preeminent duty of the Church in an institutionally separated society: to convert the soul and disciple — Christianize — the leaders of the State and its citizenry.

Conversion is even preeminent to education; without a moral foundation, *knowledge makes arrogant* (I Corinthians 8:1) and is of little value in terms of *nation* building. Therefore in our composite country, the State is highly dependent on an Institution it does not control: The Church in regard to its own health and sustainability. Conversely, for the Church to spend her energy in the Capital Community attempting to affect policy with little manifest concern for the souls of the State's leaders is to practice, biblically speaking, a misinformed and misguided sort of involvement: it is to attempt to do what others — strong in Christ Public Servants — can do much better! It is to be less than efficient. It is to misunderstand the primacy of her God-ordained role in a composite society.

The Church can best influence the State by building and sending

♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

Proverbs 14:34

*Righteousness exalts a nation.
But sin is a disgrace to any people.*



America's greatest resource — leaders in both Church and State who are men and women of character.



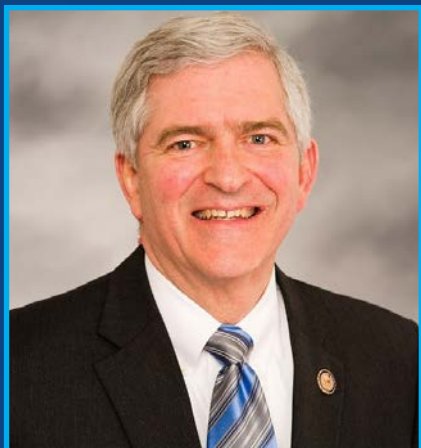


★ PUBLIC SERVANT PROFILE

Representative

Daniel Webster

10th District, Florida



“A CHRISTIAN CONGRESSMAN can’t separate his faith from the decisions he makes in office. Faith should be an integral part of a Christian’s life. Whether your job is running a business, or whether your job is being a laborer, or whether your job is being in the United States Congress, it really doesn’t matter, if your faith is integrated into your life, it is going to affect how you think, what you do, and how you act.

“For me, my faith is the center of my life. The principles of my faith are found in the Bible. I read the Bible all the way through every year; I read Psalms and Proverbs through every month. And every day I look for a verse that I write down on a piece of paper and put in my pocket, knowing I will come across the reason it is there and sure enough, that is how it works out. The biblical principles I live by affect everything I do every day including making votes, meeting with constituents, or trying to serve the community in other ways. Faith can’t be pulled apart from other areas of life. You can’t separate faith and say, ‘I go to church on Sunday that is the faith part of my life, and the rest of the week is the secular part of my life.’ You can’t live like that and have real faith. As a Christian, my faith affects everything I do.” **cm**

righteous Public Servants to serve in government. Keep in mind the State is not in the business of manufacturing *righteous* individuals. Rather, God has designed it to punish unrighteous individuals (cf. Romans 13:4; 1Peter 2:13-14). Proverbs 29:2 serves to summarize this:

When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, But when a wicked man rules, people groan.

States Proverbs 11:10-11 in this regard:

When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish, there is joyful shouting. By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down.

Adds Proverbs 28:12:

When the righteous triumph, there is great glory, but when the wicked rise, men hide themselves.

As you can see, Proverbs has much to say about the necessity of *righteous* governmental leaders! Scripture shouts about this matter! The Church must be in the business of manufacturing them via evangelism and discipleship at all levels of their career paths.

III. THE GERMINATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The necessity of evangelism by the people of God so as to birth *righteous* individuals and achieve an ongoing healthy State is proclaimed by

Proverbs 11:30:

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls.

The fruit of the righteous generally includes one’s influence, productivity, instruction and example. But notice what specifically is added to the definition of this fruit: evangelism, or the winning of souls! When Jesus visited the woman at the well in John chapter four, He was undoubtedly very thirsty and in need of water. He however set aside His personal needs to *win* the woman to salvation! He forgot about His own desires in want of achieving a higher priority: the joy of her salvation . . . the beginning of a *righteous* life.

RIGHTEOUSNESS MEANS “RIGHT-WAY-NESS”

Her soul was the most important thing on His mind. If only we had more Christian individuals whom God has placed in the Capitol who practice this priority: another’s soul over and above a self-centered preoccupation with career. States Bridges in regard to the absence of soul winning:

The Christian who neglects his brother’s salvation, fearfully hazards his own. He is gone back to his native selfishness, if he does not exhibit that “love and kindness of God that has appeared unto men.”

He goes on to say . . .

How poor is the mitre (head dress-



ing) or the crown; how debasing the wisdom of the philosopher, the scholar, or the statesman, compared with this wisdom!

The most important, the wisest use of one's time in the Capitol is evangelizing the lost: creating by God's grace and imputation of the Holy Spirit, men and women who will hunger and thirst for *righteousness* the rest of their lives! Our Capitol Ministries' ministry leader in the New York State Capitol has won 13 legislators to Christ in his first 18 months!

How misinformed, simplistic, and overlooking is the wisdom of our *nation's* leaders wherein the formation of *righteous* individuals through aggressive evangelism is never even mentioned let alone emphasized! We need Franklin Graham to hold a crusade in the Capitol! What could be more important to the *righteousness* of our *nation*! Such ignorance in our priorities bespeaks of the famine of biblical literacy in our Capitol! Make no mistake here: it is *righteousness* that *exalts a nation*! Therefore the priority of evangelism is the key to a great *nation* more so than anything else! You need to get this through your head my friends: Evangelism is the germination of *righteousness*! We need today to convert Public Servants who are lost without Christ!

IV. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RIGHTEOUS LEADERSHIP FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Given the need for *righteous*, aka,

biblically based leadership in the *nation*, what are some of the qualities that Proverbs states need be present in statesmen? Notice the following specific instructions from Proverbs that define what *righteousness* in a Public Servant should look like: The *righteous* need be:

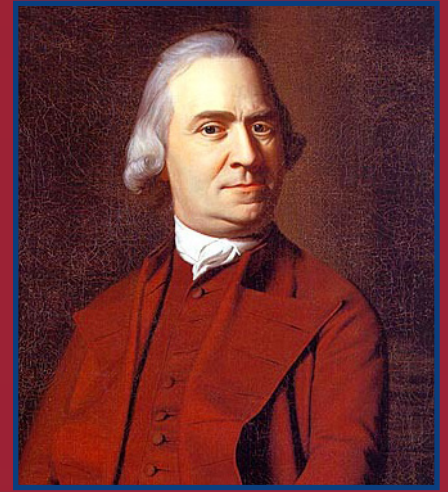
A. SELFLESS IN SERVICE

Proverbs 16:12 personifies the need for *righteousness* in the leadership of government:

It is an abomination for kings to commit wicked acts, for a throne is established on righteousness.

A *righteous* leader will have no interests of his own apart from the public good. In his or her heart there will be a consideration of others as more important than self (cf. Philippians 2). God requires that leaders whom He appoints (cf. Romans 13:1) be a blessing to people, benefactors to their country. Ecclesiastes 8:9 states: *a man has exercised authority over another man to his hurt*. How often I catch wind about the motives of our leaders and their selfish desires in seeking reelection. It is only from the knowledge, understanding, and submission to the realization that God has appointed one to office that selfish motives can be eradicated and replaced by the *righteous* motives of selfless service. *Righteous* Public Servants, state Ecclesiastes, serve others to the point that they *hurt* themselves in doing good! Can that be said of you? Are you selfless in service?

Samuel Adams



"If men of wisdom and knowledge, of moderation and temperance, of patience, fortitude and perseverance, of sobriety and true republican simplicity of manners, of zeal for the honour of the Supreme Being and the welfare of the commonwealth; if men possessed of these other excellent qualities are chosen to fill the seats of government, we may expect that our affairs will rest on a solid and permanent foundation."

— Samuel Adams, Signer of the Declaration of Independence; Father of the American Revolution; Ratifier of the US Constitution; Governor of Massachusetts.

Samuel Adams, letter to Elbridge Gerry, November 27, 1780.





Noah Webster



"In selecting men for office, let principle be your guide. Regard not the particular sect or denomination of the candidate — look to his character."

— Noah Webster, Revolutionary Soldier; Judge; Legislator; Educator; "Schoolmaster to America."

Noah Webster, *Letters to a Young Gentleman Commencing His Education*, 1789.

Understanding *the* Separation of Church and State

B. JUST IN JUDGMENT

A major God-ordained responsibility of government is the punishment of evildoers (1Peter 2:13-14). Within that vein is the awesome responsibility of just treatment through due process. A major portion of the job description of every elected official is to make sure the *nation* has an excellent judiciary system, especially God-fearing *righteous* judges (ones who, I might add, support the laws of the land — not make them up!). Proverbs 20:8 and 7 (I have reversed their order in order to display the causal and reflective aspects of just leadership as it pertains to the longevity of *a nation's* vitality):

*A king who sits on the throne of justice
Disperses all evil with his eyes.*

*A righteous man who walks in his
integrity — How blessed are his sons
after him.*

In ancient times kings would decree *justice* from their thrones. They were to rule in fear of God. So it should be today in our lawmaking, police enforcement, and judicial appointments. States Proverbs 24:23b-25:

*To show partiality in judgment is not
good. He who says to the wicked, "You
are righteous," Peoples will curse him,
nations will abhor him; But to those
who rebuke the wicked will be delight,
and a good blessing will come upon
them.*

Unfortunately for our *nation*, the majority opinions of our U.S. Supreme

Court are increasingly characterized by the aforementioned. Rather than convey *righteousness on the unrighteous*, Solomon, if here were to visit their chambers and counsel with them, would urge them to concentrate on something else. States Proverbs 31:8-9:

*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.*

Rather than make up rights for the unrighteous, judges should defend the rights of the less fortunate: for example, voiceless, yet-to-be born human beings! It is only through *righteous* lawmakers and law enforcers that a society can have any semblance of *justice*. *Justice* stems from *righteous*, God-fearing individuals who are grown into such by the discipleship priorities of the Church in a composite *nation* of co-abiding Institutions of Church and State.

C. KNOW-HOW IN HIRING

If *righteousness exalts a nation*, then it follows that the open acknowledgement of it and the discernment to elect people of integrity is the sure path to national prosperity. It follows that the *righteous*, if and when they have been elected to office, should in turn hire *righteous* employees to dispatch their values. Too often however, I have seen *righteous* elected officials hire the wrong kind of people. The wise



statesman hires others who represent his character! Hiring wrong, corrupt and wicked individuals will ruin one's office. Contrary to *establishing* you, they will misrepresent and corrupt! States Proverbs 25:5:

Take away the wicked before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

D. COMMITTED IN CONVICTIONS

For a Christian Public Servant to fall down from his principles — to compromise biblical absolutes in his policies or interactions with others — grievously tarnishes his testimony, and I might add, the corporate testimony of the body of Christ on the Hill. To be truly *righteous*, one must hold fast to biblical convictions when the pressure is on! To do so requires not only biblical knowledge of those convictions, but to be in fellowship in the Capitol with other like-minded believers on a regular basis. When the fiery trial of your convictions arrives, will you stand firm and remain *righteous* or will you fold? States Proverbs 25:26:

Like a trampled spring and a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.

E. BARRING BRIBERY

To what avail are the best laws if people do not uphold them? The reason capitalism is slow to root in Russia and former CIS countries is due in large to a lack of *righteousness* amongst

its leaders and citizens; personal *bribery* overthrows the best of legal constructs. Samuel's sons took *bribes* and it ruined Israel. Consistency must pervade every grade of official responsibility lest *bribery* corrupt a culture from the top down. People of God, people of *righteous* convictions must pervade the leadership of all systems of governance in order for them to survive. States Proverbs 29:4 in this regard:

The king gives stability to the land by justice, but a man who takes bribes overthrows it.

F. POTENT IN PRAYER

What every country or state most needs are *righteous* men and women beseeching God's presence in their personal and State affairs. Do not be deceived by syncretistic, "prayer breakfasts." God only hears the prayers of leaders and citizens who are upright, who live *righteously* through faith in Jesus Christ. States Proverbs 15:29 in this regard:

The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Proverbs 15:8-9 states further:

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD; But He loves one who pursues righteousness.

Scripture is clear; those who are at enmity with Him — who passively

James Monroe



"How prone all human institutions have been to decay; how subject the best-formed and most wisely organized governments have been to lose their check and totally dissolve; how difficult it has been for mankind, in all ages and countries, to preserve their dearest rights and best privileges, impelled as it were by an irresistible fate of despotism."

— James Monroe, Fifth U.S. President; Governor of Virginia; Secretary of State; Secretary of War; Diplomat; Military Leader serving under George Washington; U.S. Representative.

James Monroe, speech in the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 10, 1788.



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or actively reject the Son of God — their prayers are worthless and go unheard. And the State suffers for want of His blessing. The *righteous* leader is a man of potent prayer.

V. CONCLUSION

All would agree that characteristics of *righteousness* are necessary to the dispatch of good government, but the only way to produce these virtues in leaders is through the discipleship efforts of the Church in the lives of individuals. As the Church goes then, so goes the State. Put another way:

**THE STATE IS REFLECTIVE OF THE
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ITS PEOPLE, MORE SO
THAN THE CAUSAL AGENT OF IT.**

Put still another way, the preacher is much more important than the politician to the future of the country. At the end of the day, in God's design, the latter is a reflection of the aptness of the former.

Given this premiere truth regarding society, far be it from the Church to expend all its efforts in activism, seeking to cajole those who hold office (who often times reject Christ) to vote biblically. It won't happen. Instead, the call and emphasis of Proverbs regarding the germinating health of *a nation* clearly unveils an emphasis on *righteous* leadership. Accordingly, this is a task the Church must emphasize: developing statesmen in Christ! It is they who are the greatest resource of the government of The United States of America. **cm**

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