

Not Saved by the Government

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Why Christians are Destined to Lose Playing Politics

The fate of the church has not, does not, and will not hinge upon the fate of our nation, the United States of America. Indeed, the places where the Lord's church is growing best are outside of our country. The church has been around a lot longer than the United States, and is promised by God to be around eternally (Daniel 2:44, 2 Peter 1:11). I am a member of a greater nation, the government of which is upon the Lord's shoulders who is called: "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." There is no end to the increase of His government and of His peace, and this nation will never change into something that I do not love. Where is my pride for that nation? This gets me back to my point: the fate of the church is not tied up with the fate of the nation, and ultimately, all earthly nations will cease to exist; there is no such thing as the United States of Heaven, the United States of God's Kingdom, or the United States of the Church of Christ.

Because such entities do not exist, focusing my efforts upon the success of a physical nation is at worst a losing proposition, and at best produces temporal results that are bound to be undone. If I seek to focus my attention on those areas where my influence practically does not exist, what influence I do have is guaranteed to decrease, and my influence is little within the federal government. Where must I focus my attentions? I must seek to influence those within my direct sphere, for only so doing will increase my overall influence, and the good that may appertain. Therefore, my influence is much better spent on that eternal kingdom wherein I know there is a future, and affecting those few individuals that I personally know to either become part of that eternal kingdom, or remain faithful within it.

Moreover, it is not possible for the church, God's spiritual kingdom, to compete with a physical nation for advances in the arena of carnal accomplishments for several reasons. First, the focus of the church is not upon the physical, but upon the spiritual. Can churches compete and outstrip the efforts of the federal government to alleviate physical necessity? The church simply does not have the resources to do this. In such a physical battle, the government wins every time because it alone can compel its citizens to forfeit the necessary property to accomplish such ends. The government will out tax, and out spend the church every single time. However, the government cannot compete in presenting the spiritual truths that are needed to be believed and acknowledged to maintain a right relationship with both God and man. Only the church has such resources, and the church must pursue such efforts.

Second, those who promote carnal government as the solution for mankind will always make government their place of worship because it is the only kingdom they have. When the Christian seeks to effect political change, his efforts are at best divided, because he is concerned both about the government and the church, and balancing his time and efforts between the two. Those who put their trust in government alone have no such double vision. Speaking carnally, they are not burdened with the obligation of attending church on Sunday; they have no such restraints as family to distract them from their political work; they do not have any religiously motivated moral constraints that would prevent them from lambasting their political opponent. To put it bluntly, Christians have a God who is worshiped in our churches on Sunday with our friends and families. Christians promote the furtherance and growth of God's kingdom, the church; this is where their primary efforts are oriented, what they believe is eternally necessary, and where the bulk of their time is to be spent. Those who promote carnal government, however, worship the god of government. They moderate elections, attend political rallies, participate in town hall meetings, and go to political conventions. Politics is their religion, and the political party is their church! The Christian who places his greatest aims and aspirations in the church cannot compete with such political fanaticism, and ought not to try, if he values God's kingdom, God's people, and Christ's church. Seeking God's kingdom and righteousness has always been, and always will be, the Christians greatest priority whereby he is promised whatever necessities he should require (Matthew 6:33).

Third, while carnal laws can certainly prevent some immorality, they are not the system whereby God brings individuals to salvation, and ultimately the political process is about promoting carnal laws. Again, this does not mean that I want abortion and homosexual marriage to be legal; neither does this mean that I want to institutionalize entitlements. But supposing that all of the moral laws that I desired to be passed were passed, and such immoral behavior also became illegal, it would still not be the case that such carnal laws can save man from his sins. The best that such law could continue to do would be to condemn sinners. How does such accomplish what Jesus Christ is seeking to accomplish in His church? Is it going to be easier for men to be saved? Salvation is not supposed to be easy; this is why Jesus characterized it as taking up His cross. Moreover, Jesus promised that the world would hate those who seek and promote salvation, and that those who entered His kingdom would only do so under tribulation. The bottom line is that gaining control of government legislation and passing carnal laws brings us no closer to accomplishing such goals. Passing all of the carnal laws in the world would not effect the salvation of one single soul! Such laws are just dead letters.

For these reasons, the political game is an uphill battle for the Christian, and ultimately, a losing one. For us to put all of our eggs in the political basket is to be disappointed. This is not to say that we should not stand up for righteousness in the political process, nor is it to say that we ought to oppose those who do. It is however, to say that we need to remember our priorities, and focus upon what is truly lasting, important, and eternal—God's spiritual kingdom, the church. May God help us to recognize the temporal nature of man's carnal designs and the eternal value of His purposes.

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