

"POLITICS"

Sunday, April 10, 2016

OBJECTIONS

By: Allen Coleman

I. INTRODUCTION

1. *Announcements and Welcome*

- (1) Gospel Class

[AUDIO - Focus Group]

2. *Christians and Politics*

- (1) But what is the betterment of all people?
 - (i) Is not a democratic state, and therefore, a democratic process designed to ensure just that?
 - (ii) That each citizen, is by decree, not just free to, but urged to exercise his or her vote, according to his or her conscience, so that, the collective majority might determine and reflect what is in the best of interest of the people?
 - (iii) Are they really saying that a Christian, is not entitled to be heard, or otherwise involved in the public square, just because the basis for what drives their worldview and conscience is the Gospel?

[STORY - Mill Valley Club Politics]

- (iv) What is being said, is really what people have been saying for centuries. I like a democratic process where the majority, and its respective political results, favor me. And I cry, as others before me did, that it is broken, when it does not.
- (2) Over the last 20 years, evangelical Christians have been politically mobilized in an outpouring of moral concern and political engagement unprecedented since the crusade against slavery in the 19th century.
- (3) Is this a good thing? Should Christians bring their faith into the political arena? If so, how and to what degree?
 - (i) Or should Christians somehow separate their personal worldview from public interest?
- (4) These are the questions that I will ultimately try to give some answers to, bearing in mind, I cannot do so with complete satisfaction in the time allotted for this subject.
- (5) With that being said, turn with to the book of Romans, Chapter 13.



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II. SHOULD CHRISTIANS INVOLVE THEIR PERSONAL WORLDVIEW?

[ROMANS 13:1-2] - *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.]*

1. *The City of Man*

- (1) The Bible is clear, we are to be good citizens and be subject to governing authorities.
- (2) As the Roman Empire fell, Augustine, the great bishop and theologian of the early church, wrote his monumental work, **The City of God**.
- (3) In this work, Augustine explained, humanity is confronted by two cities—the City of God and the City of Man.
- (4) Presently, we find ourselves living in the City of Man:
 - (i) This city, is temporary.
 - (ii) This city is filled with mixed passions, mixed allegiances, and compromised principles.
 - (iii) Citizens of the City of Man demonstrate deadly patterns of disobedience, which they celebrate and claim their moral autonomy.
 - (iv) Augustine says, they revolt against the Creator, God.
- (5) We as individuals, pay taxes, and therefore, as Americans, are entitled to what? Representation. Which means we are entitled to a voice.
- (6) But should that voice, be a "Christian" voice?
 - (i) That brings us to the City of God.

2. *The City of God*

- (1) In the City of God, reality is very different.
 - (i) The City of God is eternal.
- (2) Christians, to some degree are strangers and aliens in the City of Man, because their citizenship is no longer here.

[PHP. 3:20] - *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...]*

- (3) When God saves a Christian through faith in Jesus, their worldview isn't just changed, but your citizenship.



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- (i) The City of God takes as its sole concern the the will of God, and therefore, the greater glory of God.

[1 JN. 2:17] - *And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*]

- (ii) Augustine wrote that in the City of God, all things are ruled by God's Word, and the perfect rule of God is the passion of all its citizens.
- (iii) The City of Man is marked by autonomy and disobedience to God, in contrast, the City of God is marked unconditional obedience to the command of God.
- (iv) This City, that Augustine imagined, is more commonly referred to as Heaven.

[REV. 21:2] - *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*]

- (4) And it would be a mistake to think that the responsibility of Christians, is to simply wait it out in the City of Man, keep quiet, keep our heads down, until death.

[MATT. 6:10] - *Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*]

3. Separation of Church (City of God) and State (City of Man)?

- (1) To ask a Christian to separate their worldview from the political arena is not possible.
- (2) Christianity is just about beliefs...it's about identity.
 - (i) Same-sex attraction - the argument is that it's who I am.
 - (ii) I imagine you would find it politically untenable, and socially distasteful, to ask you to set aside what you believe to be central to your identity, would you not?
 - (iii) Why would you ask me to do the same?
- (3) But what about separation of church and state?
 - (i) The founders of our nation, who were escaping religious persecution founded the notion of "separation of church and state" to protect the church from state involvement, not the other way around.
 - (ii) The Church of England was controlled, in large part, by the Monarchy.



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- (4) The late Dr. Carl F. H. Henry addressed evangelicals with a manifesto for Christian engagement in his landmark book ***"The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism"***.
 - (i) As Dr. Henry eloquently argued, disengagement from the critical issues of the day is not an option.
 - (ii) God is clear, Christians are to engage the City of Man with their worldview:

[1 PE. 2:13-15 - *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.*]

- (5) Peter is saying that our responsibility to the City of Man, who has become ignorant of God's plan for human flourishing, is to juxtapose their City planning, with God's.
- (6) To give them a vision of a more permanent, a more eternal future.

4. *Separation of Church (City of God) and State (City of Man)?*

- (1) To ask a Christian to separate their worldview from the political arena is not possible.
- (2) So now, how do we do this?

III. HOW SHOULD CHRISTIANS INVOLVE THEIR PERSONAL WORLDVIEW?

1. *Personal Political Views*

- (1) Well, first, let me ask the question again.
- (2) Can we have political views outside the considerations of our Christian faith?
 - (i) The answer is no, we cannot.
 - (ii) In other words, you cannot separate how you vote, from who you are.
- (3) Equally, not an option, is to disengage from the political process out of being disheartened or discouraged. In other words, if I can't separate my faith from my politics, then I quit. There are only bad options.
- (4) Remember, what's your responsibility when voting? To juxtapose the City of Man, against the City of God.



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- (5) So I can't tell you what to vote for, but I can tell you with reasonable certainty, how to vote.
 - (i) Line by line, issue by issue, ask the question how can my vote be for those things that are more indicative of my citizenship w/ the City of God.
 - (ii) Caring for widows and orphans, which is a City of God issue, clearly has implication on this City of Man vote.
 - (iii) Issues are easier than candidates.
- (6) But this is hard! It'll take forever. Yep.
 - (i) Listen, we're already facing criticism from the City of Man that we are not well thought out in our political process.
- (7) Now, that's how we vote personally, now how to we engage publicly?

2. *Public Policial Engagement*

- (1) First, before we can do that, we must grasp the fact that our government cannot save us! Only God can.
- (2) We never read in the New Testament of Jesus or any of the apostles expending any time or energy schooling believers on how to reform the pagan world of its idolatrous, immoral, and corrupt practices via the government.
- (3) The apostles never called for believers to demonstrate civil disobedience to protest the Roman Empire's unjust laws or brutal schemes.
- (4) Instead, the apostles commanded the first-century Christians, as well as us today, to proclaim the gospel and live lives that give clear evidence to the gospel's transforming power.
- (5) So here's what I want us to get:

[1 COR. 7:29-31]

- (6) Care as though you don't care. Vote as though you don't vote.
 - (i) **Read Desiring God article.**

IV. CONCLUSION

1. *We Have Bigger Fish to Fry* [MATT. 28:18-20]

- (1) The local church is still the hope of the world (**Angelhouse Video**)

