

TITUS

A HOUSE IN ORDER



Craig Smith • Government • February 14, 2021

How involved are you in politics?

All temporary human authority is under and established by God's ultimate authority...

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God...he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." (Rom. 13:1-2) – Would this verse apply to a nation ruled by communism, socialism, a republic or monarchy?

Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above." (John 19:11a)

- **To restrain evil and promote good** – "For he is God's servant to do you good...He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." (Rom. 13:4) How do you see our government restraining evil in our society?

In Titus 3, Paul reminds the church of it's relationship to government and civil authority...

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities... (Titus 3:1a)

- **Accept and obey civil authority** – "...to be obedient..." (Titus 3:1a)

When the government commands what God forbids or forbids what God commands, the church is obligated to obey God rather than men – "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19-20)

Can you think of an example where the preceding point would be true, either from our government or governments of history?

- **Prepare and promote the gospel** – "...to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men." (Titus 3:1b-2)

The government has been given some authority "around" sacred matters (*ius circa sacra*), but never "in" sacred matters (*ius in sacris*) – "'Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?' 'Caesar's', they replied. Then Jesus said to them, 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.'" (Mark 12:16b-17) – Here is another example on how government exercises its authority, again, do you see examples of this from our government currently or in history?

Tim Keller's political advice to Christians per Jesus' response (on Mark 12:16-17)...

- **Avoid political simplicity**
- **Avoid political complacency**
- **Avoid political primacy (making first priority)**
-Discuss with your group what each one means, then ask the question, "am I too simple, complacent or primary in my approach to politics?" Another question may be, which of the three above do I tend to gravitate?

We can never make the people who occupy our government more important than the Lord who occupies our hearts...

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... (1 Pet. 3:15) –

Can we do this in politics? Are we doing this in politics? Let's spend some time praying about it.