

Biblical Worldview-Whose Governance?

Assertion of The Question of Government & Politics

I. FOUNDATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

- **Government:**
 - **Etymology:** Derived from the Old French *gouvernement* ("control, direction, administration") and the Latin *gubernare* ("to direct, rule, guide, govern," originally "to steer, to pilot").
 - **Definition:** A system that exercises or administers control over its citizens. It is the framework by which a group of people is ruled.
- **Politics:**
 - **Etymology:** Derived from the Greek *politikos*, which originates from polis ("city"). *Politikos* means "pertaining to the state and its administration, pertaining to public life."
 - **Definition:** The practice of governance over citizens, associated with public life and the obligations of citizens within a society. It is described as the "science and art of government."

II. THE SECULAR HUMANISTIC WORLDVIEW ("INSIDE THE BOX")

This perspective frames the purpose of government and politics from a viewpoint that does not rely on theism or supernatural beliefs.

General Definition	"Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without theism or other supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good."
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Core Tenets

- God does not exist, or at the very least, God cannot be known.
- There is no belief in transcendent, absolute truth.
- Human beings can build a better society through the application of "science," reason, rational thought, and utility.
- The preferred method for building this better society is Democracy.

Source	Quotation
<i>The Humanist Magazine</i>	"[Secular Humanist] affirming the dignity of each human being, it supports the maximization of individual liberty and opportunity consonant with social and planetary responsibility. It advocates the extension of participatory democracy and the expansion of the open society, standing for human rights and social justice."
Bette Chambers (fmr. Pres of AHA)	"[Secular Humanist believes] all human life must seek a reason for existence within the bounds of an uncaring physical world, and it is love coupled with empathy, democracy , and a commitment to selfless service which undergirds the faith of a humanist."
Steven Schafersman	"[Secular] Humanists stand for the building of a more humane, just, compassionate, and democratic society using a pragmatic ethics based on human reason, experience, and reliable knowledge-an ethics that judges the consequences of human actions by the well-being of all life on Earth."

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III. A CRITIQUE OF DEMOCRACY

- **Stated Goal of Democracy:** The economy and society should be run democratically to "meet public needs, not to make profits for a few." This requires radical transformation of government and economic structures to allow ordinary Americans to participate in decisions affecting their lives.
- **Analysis Based on Plato's *Republic*:** The text draws a parallel between modern democratic ideals and Plato's vision, highlighting several outcomes:
 - Governance is shared under the direction of "Philosopher-Kings."
 - Private property and possessions are abolished.
 - The system promotes utilitarianism and mob control.
 - Individual effort and production are discouraged.
- **Concluding Assessment:** Democracy is framed as "the systematic means by which a particular group can wield power (or influence) over another group to take their resources and possessions and redistribute them... for the sake of 'equality.'"

IV. THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW ("OUTSIDE THE BOX")

Core Tenets

- God exists and is the God of the Biblical worldview.
- God is the creator of humankind, making them in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27). This confers inherent value and worth upon all human beings.
- God sets the instructions and moral framework for humanity.

Scripture Passage	Key Principles Derived
Genesis 1:26-27	God is the creator; He created humankind in His image; humans have inherent value.
Genesis 9:6	God sets instructions; mankind cannot murder because humans are made in God's image; this promotes civic life.
Romans 1:18-23	Knowledge about God is evident within people and seen through creation, leaving them "without excuse."
Romans 13:1-4	All authority comes from God; governing authorities are established by God and serve as His ministers; resisting authority is opposing God's ordinance.
Proverbs 29:2	A distinction is made between rulers, noting that "when a wicked man rules, people groan."

The Primary Responsibility of Government

The government's main role, from this perspective, is to reward good and punish evil in a physical sense. Its duties are to protect life and to promote and encourage virtue among its citizens.

V. THE ROLE OF CHRISTIANS IN GOVERNMENT

- **The Main Directive:** To promote the true function of government and transcendent truths as God has outlined them in Scripture.

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- **Specific Policy Goals:**
 - Protect and promote policies that affirm life (Genesis 1:26-28).
 - Protect and promote policies that defend the familial relationship (Genesis 2:18-24).
 - Protect and promote policies and laws that allow the expression of truth through speech and writing.
- **A Crucial Limitation:** The purpose of a believer in government is not to "advance, push forward, build, extend, expand, etc." the kingdom of God within society. The source asserts that a believer "CANNOT do this."
- **Evangelistic Responsibility:** To take advantage of opportunities to discuss and talk about the gospel of Christ.

VI. ASSOCIATED CHRISTIAN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

- **Christian Reconstructionism (Theonomy):** The belief that all of society should be established and preserved under biblical law, specifically the Law of Moses. It is associated with Calvinism, Lordship theology, and Post-Millennialism.
- **New Apostolic Reformation (NAR):** The belief that believers should exert a dominating influence over the "seven mountains of society": Education, media, family, religion, art, entertainment, and government. This ideology also promotes dominionism to advance the Kingdom of God.
- **Post-Millennialism:** An eschatological view that the world will progressively improve as the Church subjects it to the Lordship of Christ, which will ultimately lead to the Second Coming.

VII. THE BEST OPERATION OF GOVERNMENT FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

- **The Ideal Government:** The kingdom established by Jesus Christ upon His return, as described in Revelation 19:11-16. He will rule as "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."
- **Characteristics of This Future Kingdom:**
 - Jesus Christ will return to establish it and will rule the nations with a "rod of iron" (Rev. 2:27).
 - Glorified saints will rule alongside Christ (2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 20:4).
 - These rulers will be free from the influence of a sin nature (1 Corinthians 15:50-57).
 - The kingdom will be governed with the perfect righteousness and justice of Christ.

VIII. CONCLUSION

1. **Government** is the system by which a group of people is administered.
2. **Politics** is the practice of governance and relates to the obligations of citizens.
3. **A Christian's responsibility** in politics is to promote truth, not to advance the kingdom of God on Earth.
4. **Democratic philosophy** and government are presented as being antithetical to the biblical perspective of the activity of government.