



THE
CHRISTIAN
IN TODAY'S
SOCIETY

SALT AND LIGHT IN AMERICA'S PUBLIC SQUARE

A city street scene at dusk or dawn. The sky is a mix of orange and blue. In the foreground, there's a sidewalk with a few people walking. A red bus is moving across the street. On the left, there's a building with a sign that says "PINEAPPLE". On the right, there are palm trees and a building with a classical facade. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

In this election cycle, Christians should not be invisible. And they should not be silent.

SALT & LIGHT
IN
AMERICA'S PUBLIC
SQUARE



Christians and
government in
the Bible

The historical
role of
Christians in
America

The importance
of Christians in
the public
square today
and why that
feels scary

America's
founding and
its contribution
to the world

The role of
American
Christians
today

SALT & LIGHT
IN
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SQUARE

CHURCH

HOME

GOVERNMENT
Judicial Executive
Legislative

Kingdom Domains

HEALTH
Physical + Mental
Health

MARKETPLACE
Agriculture Financial
Scientific

MEDIA
Arts Sports
Entertainment

EDUCATION

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Journalism

Education

Community Organizing

Activism

Non-Profits

Government + Politics

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EDUCATE YOURSELF

Read broadly and don't get microcultured

LIBERAL

New Yorker
Slate
LA Times

NPR
Al Jazeera
NYTimes
Huff Post
Washington Post
Atlantic

NEUTRAL

NBC
CBS
Wall Street Journal
Newsweek
USA Today
Economist
ABC

CNN

CONSERVATIVE

Fox
Drudge
Breitbart
Blaze

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THE BIBLE ON CHRISTIANS AND GOVERNMENT

Matthew 22

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. ¹⁶ They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. ¹⁷ Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?"

¹⁸ But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, ²⁰ and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?"

²¹ "Caesar's," they replied.

Then he said to them, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

²² When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

We are called to live in two kingdoms and we must live rightly in each one

The church should not govern that which is Caesar's

The government should not govern that which is God's

Most difficult: when people disagree which realm something belongs to

Salt & Light are desperately needed in the American public square

THE BIBLE ON CHRISTIANS AND GOVERNMENT

Acts 5:29

Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"

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THE BIBLE ON CHRISTIANS AND GOVERNMENT

Acts 5:29

1 Peter 2:13-17

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

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Acts 5:29

1 Peter 2:13-17

Hebrews 13:17

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

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Acts 5:29

1 Peter 2:13-17

Hebrews 13:17

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Honor the
emperor, but obey
God first

THE ROLE OF CHRISTIANS HAS ALWAYS BEEN IMPORTANT

The US has never been an explicitly Christian nation

It has been rooted in Christian values and a worldview

The Founding Fathers assumed its importance

"Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other." *John Adams*

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The Founding Fathers assumed its importance

"Religion and virtue are the only foundations ... of republicanism and all free government" *John Adams*

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"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to a political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports." *George Washington*

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"Whatever makes men good Christians, make them good citizens." *Daniel Webster*

THE ROLE OF CHRISTIANS IS CRITICAL TODAY

salt and light means engaging in difficult conversations

Theological Liberals **"Harmonists"**

Social Gospel (moral teaching to change this world)

Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans

Evangelicals **"Transformationists"**

Gospel transforms individuals who transform societies

Most of the churches in Christian media

Theological Fundamentalists **"Separatists"**

Gospel is to save individuals from a corrupt world

Baptists, Mennonites, Brethren, Pentecostals

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THE ROLE OF CHRISTIANS IS CRITICAL TODAY

salt and light means engaging in difficult conversations

The manner in which this was done by evangelicals in the last 30 years has had negative repercussions

Evangelicals

"Transformationists"

Gospel transforms individuals who transform societies

Most of the churches in Christian media

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The manner in which this was done by evangelicals in the last 30 years has had negative repercussions

seen as "anti-gay", "judgmental", "hypocritical", "sheltered", "too political"

Evangelicals

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people have shied away from the church

Evangelicals

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Christians have shied away from the public square

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Evangelicals "Transformationists"

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*Most of the churches in Christian
media*

If Christians don't act and speak publicly about moral and ethical issues, who will? On what basis will the nation discern right from wrong?

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This is especially important in a
democratic (majority rules) world

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The space for faith-based values in
the public square is narrowing

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What is the basis of ethics? Is it
simply about protecting an
individual's rights?

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What prevailing values counter-
balance today's focus on individual
rights? What are they?

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sexuality

immigration

What prevailing values counter-
balance today's focus on individual
rights?

race

economic p

environment

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AMERICA HAS A UNIQUE HISTORY

Christians should be a part on an America that continues to live that out

The US was founded by immigrants who had a conscious Christian worldview in its founding

For better and worse, a lot of America's policies have been shaped by its sense of destiny from God

Freedom, cultural tolerance, human rights, economic prosperity and and acting justly have been hallmarks

I want to see America live out its destiny to bring blessing (peace, justice and prosperity) to others

A photograph of a city street at dusk. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent grey rectangle containing text. The background shows a multi-story building with a grid of windows, palm trees, a traffic light, and a blurred car. The sky is a mix of orange and blue.

IF YOU LIVE HERE, GIVE HERE
don't just live as "me", but as "we"

A circular logo with a white background and a blue border. It contains the text "SALT & LIGHT IN AMERICA'S PUBLIC SQUARE" in blue and black.

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Christians and
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the Bible

The historical
role of
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The importance
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and why that
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America's
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The role of
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RESPONSE

**Prayerfully
Read Up on the
Issues**

**Pray for the
country**

**Be salt and
light in your
behavior and in
your speech**

**Don't shy away
from the
application of
your values
and worldview
in the world
you live in**

**Are you called
into the public
square?**

**Who is God
calling you to
serve?**