

## BACKGROUND:

Life in Egypt for the Israelites became unbearable under Pharaoh.  
 Kings during the divided kingdom period were sometimes bad kings.  
 A ruler let a murderer go free and sentenced Jesus to death.  
 Early Christians lived under Roman rule which became hostile to Christianity.  
 Apostles warned, beaten, imprisoned, and killed by rulers.  
 Followers suffered. Heb.10:32-36  
 Throughout the ages rulers have been hostile to Christians.  
 Today in many countries some suffer: loss of freedom of religion, loss of property, and loss of life.

## CIVIL RULE

**Ordained by God.** Rom 13:1,4  
 Not all rulers are good rulers.  
**Perfection in design and concept, but the reality is those involved are less than perfect.**  
 Christ set up how churches were to be structured—but ..., Phi.1:1, Eph.4:11-13  
 Diotrephes and corrupt, inept, and self-serving elders. Act.20:30  
**Imperfect rulers are better than none (anarchy).**

## BIBLICAL TEACHINGS

**Subjection required.** Rom 13:5  
**Purpose is to punish the wicked.** Rom 13:4 (Yes, innocent may be punished.)  
**Pay taxes.** Rom 13:6 (yes, money may be spent on things you do not approve.)  
**Pray for.** 1Ti.2:1-3  
**Limitations:** must not pre-empt God's rules. Act.5:29 (but not to be disrespectful. Cf. Act.23:5)

## LIFE IN AMERICA

**While this country founded on many Bible principles, no guarantee of being followed.**  
 Pope declared Europe has become secular; not "Christian."  
 U.S. is becoming more secular everyday.  
**Problems facing Christians today in America.**  
 "Separation of church and state" misunderstood and abused.  
 "Politically correct" mind-set challenging Biblical morals and beliefs.  
 Immorality championed.  
 Misconception concerning legislating morality.  
**Some say "Can't legislate morality."** True. But it needs to be regulated.  
 Are there not laws against immorality (incest, polygamy, sex with minors)?  
 Laws never have and never will stop unacceptable behavior.  
**Under democracies, elected leaders approve.**  
 What may be declared legal, or approved, is not necessarily good or right.  
 Laws can never make wickedness right. Can only make it legal. Isa.5:20-21

## CHRISTIAN'S PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT

**Given opportunity to have a voice in choosing leaders, laws, etc.**  
**Given opportunity to have a role in government—Christians not excluded.**  
**Should Christians refrain from speaking up? No more than any other citizen.**  
 Citizenship in kingdom doesn't bar citizenship in a country. Phi.3:20  
 Dual citizenship. Christians have a stake in country here and the one above.  
 Paul exerted his rights as Roman citizen. Act.22:25; 25:11  
 A widow pestered a judge for protection. Luk.18:1-5  
 Peter exhorts us to zealously defend faith and morals of Christianity. 1Pe.3:13-16  
**Over the centuries society's morals have been greatly influenced by Christianity.**  
 Each state's (all 50) constitution invokes God protection.  
**God's people have the right and obligation to speak up.**  
 When proponents of immorality demand society approval, Christians must speak up.  
 If one has the right to speak up in favor of immorality, another has right to challenge.

## INFLUENCE

**Christians are to be the “leaven which influences the whole” in society.**

**To set an example in word and deed.**

**To let your light shine.** Mat.5:13-16 (Don't become a “tasteless” influence.)

**Don't hide your faith and belief.** *Unashamedly, boldly, let your influence be felt, seen, heard.*

CONCLUSION: *HAVING DONE THE WILL OF GOD.* Heb.10:36

When all is said and done, what really matters is not what government we live under, but how we conduct ourselves under it. The conduct of rulers do not, cannot, jeopardize our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Phi.1:27-28, Col.4:5, Rom 8:37-39