

The Christian and Human Government: Part 2

Acts 5.12-29

God is sovereign over governments, but they are often evil. When they are, God's people demonstrate allegiance to Him by refusing to obey, knowing full well that they may face temporal consequences.

Avoiding Wrong Views of God's Sovereignty*Our God is not a Deistic or Deterministic God!*Biblical Examples of God's People Disobeying Government

- Hebrew midwives (Exodus 1)
- Rahab (Joshua 2)
- Obadiah (1 Kings 18)
- Joash saved (2 Kings 11)
- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and Daniel (Daniel 3, 6)
- Peter and John (Acts 5)
- Tribulation saints (Revelation 13)

Biblical Guidelines for Christians Responding to Government

- Christians are commanded to pray for their leaders, and for God to intervene if those leaders are pursuing ungodly policies.
- Christians should resist governments and policies which interfere with our ability to obey God, or go against His will.
- Christians who disobey evil governments should be ready to suffer their government's punishment for their actions.
- Christians may pursue any legal means to remove evil leaders and support those who promote good policies.
- Christians who remain silent in the face of evil and injustice will incur God's judgment for their silence.



1. As Christians consider how we should live in an increasingly evil world, it is critical to not simply focus on the depravity around us, but to keep our eyes focused on – and even sharpen our awareness of God and His holiness. Misconceptions about God are spread by Satan, and have caused many Christians to stumble. In this regard, understanding God's sovereignty is vital. Although we cannot *fully* grasp everything about God (see Isaiah 55.9), He reveals Himself in Scripture, and creation (Psalms 8, 19; Rom. 1.20). How would you describe God's sovereignty, while avoiding common errors like deism or determinism?
2. One of the great wonders of the Christian life is that God gives to us the privilege of 'changing history.' By living our lives for Him, we bring light into darkness (Matt. 5.16; Eph. 5.11-14). While God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, He has *committed to us the word of reconciliation* – that is, by sharing the good news of God's love and Jesus' death on the cross for our sins, we can be the means through which a person is eternally *reconciled to God* (see 2 Cor. 5.18-20)! This amazing role extends to every facet of our lives. Stop and consider: What areas in my life, and in what ways, does God want me to 'affect history'?
3. The great challenge for millions of Christians in the world today is living out their faith in the context of government opposition. This is not new: Scripture records many men and women of faith who stood for God, and against political leaders. Some are listed on the other side of this paper. What other biblical heroes can you think of? You can read about Christians who stood for Christ and faced oppression in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, or *By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, by James and Marti Hefley.
4. While Christians in America still enjoy many freedoms, oppression is increasing. What instances of opposition to Christian truths and morals have you observed? What 'price' have Christians paid for their stand? Read Ezekiel 3.17-21. What *responsibility* do we bear as 'watchmen' in speaking the truth in *our day*?