

Four Dangers in Being a Political Christian

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As American Christians, we have a unique experience in the kingdom of Christ. No other nation offers to the freedom we have to worship, and the abundance of food, shelter, clothing, and non-vital items that we are free to consume. We even struggle with issues of overconsumption, something unheard of in human history. We often deal with the spiritual struggle such abundance brings, but not as often do we deal with the spiritual struggle that our national liberty also brings to us. This lesson serves to remind us that our liberty as Americans needs to be limited by our liberty in Christ.

Of course, it is not a sin to be a politically minded or active Christian. In the New Testament, we meet a brother in Christ named Erastus several times (Acts 19:22, Romans 16:23, 2 Timothy 4:20). This brother was a public politician, and there is an inscription which bears his name found in Corinth today. It was not a sin to run for public office, or to be involved in politics. However, there are certain dangers he needed to avoid that we do too. Let us consider four dangers of being a political Christian.

Danger #1: Forgetting where our allegiance lies. The bible proclaims that our citizenship is not on earth, but in heaven. This does not mean that it is a sin to have allegiance to a nation, but that this citizenship is secondary to our spiritual nation. Sometimes, even the most righteous nations call on their members to violate the law of God. Daniel esteemed his place with God greater than leading the city of Babylon. We too need to keep our American citizenship a distant second to our place in the kingdom of God. There will be no "Americans" in heaven; "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" (Galatians 3:28)

Danger #2: Trusting the wrong people. It is easy to begin to feel that certain politicians have our interest at heart more than others. That is their goal - to make us feel we are represented. Yet do any of them really represent Christ? It is dangerous to being to trust men over God. In Micah 7:3-7 God warned Israel not to trust their princes; so we too ought not to trust ANY political party to represent Christ. There will be no democrats or republicans in heaven; "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" (Galatians 3:28)

Danger #3: Losing perspective of Spiritual values. Sometimes we begin to see a party platform as being a Spiritual value. An issue like gun control can come to hold the same place in our belief as faith or repentance. Yet issues like government spending, welfare, or military support are not spiritual issues, merely worldly ones. It does not matter in Christ on such things, and if we think it does, we are in dangers. There are no conservatives or liberals in heaven; "*There is*

neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

Danger #4: Sinning Against God's Authority. We all receive or see political satirical cartoons meant to insult or degrade our national leaders. Do we participate in such rhetoric? If so, we have sinned against God. We are told in Romans 13:1-7 that the authority of our leaders comes from God, and we are to respect and honor those who are our leaders. We are to pray for them and seek to live peaceably whenever possible (I Timothy 2:1-4). When Paul was slapped by the high priest in Acts 23, he reviled that man unknowingly. When he realized to whom he spoke, he repented, seeing that it was a sin to speak evil of a leader. Many speak evil of our president or leaders, not realizing they have sinned against God.

So as we see in these examples, it can be dangerous to be politically minded in our nation. We must always remember that this world is not our home, and the trappings of this world are passing away. We are citizens of an eternal kingdom, held by those laws and rules.