

Biblical Citizenship

Definition: Biblical Citizenship begins with the recognition that “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil 3:20), but then involves seeking to live as people who respect the authority of their government by standing for truth, righteousness and justice, as well as encouraging biblical principles in governance that seek the welfare of all citizens.

Foundation: Biblical Citizenship is our attempt to apply biblical wisdom to the relationship between God, government, and individuals. The Bible teaches that the authority to govern comes from God and that He determines all the times and boundaries for nations. This means that governments have the God-given responsibility to promote peace, encourage good and restrain evil. It also means that citizens have the God-given responsibility to respect governing authorities by submitting to them except when their directives are opposed to God’s principles. (See Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Acts 5:29; 17:24-31)

Biblical Citizenship Team Purpose: To equip the EFCC family with information from a Christian worldview regarding their role, responsibility and engagement in culture and the political process. Our focus is to provide awareness, tools, and opportunities to stand for truth according to God’s plan and for His glory in the realm of citizenship.

Contact Information: John Waring at 760.480.9454 or johnwaring42@outlook.com; Josh Rose at 760.781.2120 or jrose@efcc.org.

Christ and Biblical Citizenship

What does the Bible say about Government?

Government, along with the family and Church, are institutions designed by God for a unique purpose. Under God’s authority it is to promote peace, encourage good and restrain evil. The Government is to treat citizens justly and fairly, seeing itself as a servant. It is responsible for protecting the rights of citizens. These “rights” do not come from the government, but from God. This is uniquely restated in the U.S. Constitution – one of the things that make America “exceptional.” (John 19:11, Rom 13:1-6, Matt 20:25-28)

God uses even bad governments to accomplish His will. (Jeremiah 25:8-9, Acts 4:27-28) Even though the Roman government of Jesus’ time did not treat citizens justly and fairly, its strength and domination in the known world permitted much faster travel and communications, which allowed Christianity to spread much more rapidly than it would have otherwise.

What did Jesus demonstrate during His arrest, trial and sentence?

One aspect of the Crucifixion of Christ was His confrontation with government. Jesus was a “Biblical” citizen of His time and place. He demonstrated strength under control (meekness) – using that strength when and where appropriate (as in the temple where God’s laws were being ignored) – and obedience to the rules of the government, even though He could have destroyed all earthly rulers in an instant.

What are the Responsibilities of Biblical Citizens in America?

In America, as a representative democracy, WE are the government, and so it is our responsibility to rule wisely by registering to vote, educating ourselves in the principles of a biblical worldview and being alert and informed, actively encouraging the good and voting for those who will best serve as God requires. (1 Thess. 5:6) Further, we should consider running for an office ourselves if God leads us to do so. Biblical citizens are also called to pray for their government leaders. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

Even when government does not live up to its responsibility, as in Jesus’ time, citizens are to honor those who govern them and submit to authority, endeavoring to demonstrate the love and wisdom of God as Daniel and Jesus did even in difficult circumstances. (Mark 12:17, Romans 13:1-4, 1 Peter 2:13-17) The one exception to this command of God is when government dictates go against the dictates of God. At that point, citizens must obey God.