



Separation of Truth and State? Why the Church Must be in Politics

If a civilization may be judged by what it puts in the closet, speaking volumes in today's America is that Christianity is being closeted — often by *Christians*.

Making this point recently was James Gottry, vice president for public policy at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. At *LifeZette*, he [wrote](#) that more “than half of Americans believe that churches and religious organizations are good for the country, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey.”



“But in a seemingly contradictory result, 63 percent say the church and other houses of worship should stay out of politics.”

“In other words, Americans think the church has a positive impact on society — but they also think the church should keep quiet on cultural and political issues that set the present and future course for our society,” he continued.

“Or more directly: Churches, you make this country better, now stay out of the important matters that define our country.... *Huh?*”

Gottry points out that “a push to keep the church out of a particular part of society is effectively a push to exclude Christians.”

“But should any group remove itself (or be involuntarily removed) from the workings of our constitutional republic?” he asks.

The reality, Gottry also states, is that our political representatives pass laws influencing every aspect of our society, forging policies that will literally shape the future. Empower the wrong people and, as history has repeatedly shown, it can mean economic turmoil, world war, famine, genocide, destruction, and/or civilizational collapse. The stakes are high.

As such, Christians have not just a right but an obligation to help shape society. They have a duty to be “salt and light,” as Gottry puts it.

Despite this, “Christians might say, ‘I’m eager to share the Gospel, but I don’t want to address topics including same-sex marriage, abortion, gender identity, human sexuality, euthanasia, health care, immigration, and the welfare system,’” Gottry laments. “I just want to talk about the Gospel.”

The flaw in this thinking is that the Bible (along with churches’ catechisms) offers counsel on a whole host of the above, and other matters, precisely because these things do matter; you can’t separate moral injunctions from the Gospel. In fact, “Love thy neighbor” is itself a moral injunction (and a tough one!).

As Gottry puts it, Christians are obliged to spread the “Good News,” which is not called, do note, the



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“Good Secret.” News is not “news” if it’s kept private, hidden, behind lock and key.

In truth, though, the shrinking from hot-button issues is largely a “*conservative*” Christian phenomenon. Left-wing self-professed Christians *and their churches* are never reluctant to get involved politically and push open borders, same-sex “marriage,” the Made-up Sexual Status (MUSS) agenda, and other “fashionable” positions. Why the difference?

“Conservative” Christians know that since cultural power now lies with the other side, standing up for their beliefs publicly will bring scorn, ostracism, and perhaps economic persecution. So many choose the Chick-fil-A route — using the “private faith” line as a rationalization.

(We should ponder here a certain virtue: *courage*.)

Also consider that the only logical reason to embrace Christianity, or any faith, and govern your life by it is that you believe it’s the Truth. (Unfortunately, many self-proclaimed and well-meaning Christians today don’t; [they’re moral relativists](#).) So anyone with this belief who shies away from politics is essentially saying, “I don’t think having the Truth influence our government is important enough to fight for.” Of course, if the Truth doesn’t exert that influence, the process of elimination tells us that lies will.

Moreover, a very fundamental point is universally missed regarding the notion that the church shouldn’t speak out on government affairs:

As government grows and begins to meddle in most everything, applying this principle means that the church can’t speak out on most anything!

For example, there was a time when government was silent on sexual matters and even marriage and these issues were the church’s domain. Now that government is legislating in these areas (e.g., homosexual “rights”) and they’re “political,” however, should we say that the church, suddenly, shouldn’t be involved?

That’s a great recipe for replacing Christian virtue with secular values: Just get the government involved in something you want to take over, and Christians will sit down and shut-up.

Yet there’s an even more fundamental misunderstanding here, one lying at the heart of the wider, “separation of church and state” notion (the modern conception of it, anyway). Consider: If the religious ideas in question really have been handed down by God, Creator of the Universe and Inerrant Author of All, don’t we have a duty to infuse our public sphere with them? Is it not then an imperative that we immerse schoolchildren in this divine light? Of course, naysayers may now respond, “Not everyone worships sky fairies! These are just man-made beliefs.”

Alright, but if so, why say that the man-made beliefs we happen to call “secular” may be in the public square, but the man-made beliefs we happen to call “religious” may not be? If they’re all man-made, wherein lies the difference?

Conclusion: Either these beliefs are man-made, in which case they can share the table with other man-made ideas and *may* be in the public square.

Or they’re from God and *must* be there.

The West has long been in the grip of an illusion, a bizarre prejudice wherein ideas, merely because they’re labeled “religious,” must endure second class status while secular ideas seize the culture and politics and relegate Christianity to an ever-shrinking land of exile.



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In reality, though, this distinction between “religious” and “secular” is largely a *false one*. The senses in which we use these terms, in fact, are relatively modern. For there was a time when beliefs were not “secular” or “religious” — or even liberal or conservative, or right or left — but were classified by way of the only distinction that matters: the true vs. the untrue.

No other perspective makes sense. Think about it: If God exists, is it significant that we call recognition of this reality “religious” or that it’s true? If Marxism is essentially false, is it significant that we call recognition of that reality “secular” or that it’s untrue? There is only Truth and everything else — and everything else, no matter how you dress it up linguistically, is a lie.

We all have a duty to fight for and actualize Truth in our homes, businesses, organizations, schools, and, yes, in our halls of government. For as Christians should know better than anyone, the Truth will not just set us free, but is the only thing that can keep us free from a tyranny that one day may even forbid us from sharing the Gospel.

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