

# Of Church And State

## 2 Chronicles 7:14

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**Teaching Aim:** To understand the original intent of the Founding Fathers of the United States of America and to grasp the concept of separation of Church and State. To realize our nation is straying from the biblical principles this country was founded upon. To see that we need to repent and turn back to God before it is too late.

### Digging Deeper Into God's Word (Bible Study)

#### Part I: The rise and fall of Solomon (2 Chron. 7:1-20)

1. Who were the three kings of Israel's United Kingdom? (See **1 Sam. 9:15; 1 Sam. 16:13; 1 Kin. 1:13**) Who was king when the kingdom expanded to its greatest power and geographical boundaries? Who was king when Israel had its greatest wealth? Which king triggered the decline of Israel? Why?
2. What kind of a walk did Solomon have with the LORD initially? (See **1 Kin. 3:3**) What did the young Solomon (around 20 years old) ask for when the LORD appeared to him in a dream and said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" (See **1 Kin. 3:9**) How did the LORD respond to Solomon's humble request? (See **1. Kin. 3:10-15**)
3. What are some of the things that led to Solomon's downfall? How was the downfall of Solomon similar to what we are seeing happening in the United States today?

#### Part II: What does the Bible say about obeying the civil authorities? (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17; Acts 4:1-22; 5:17-32)

1. Who should submit to the governing authorities? (**See Rom. 13:1**) According to **Rom. 13:2**, who is it Christians are actually rebelling against when they rebel against the governing authorities? Is it a surprise to God who is in power at any given time? How should Christians respond to those politicians whom God has “allowed” to be in office? (**See Rom. 13:3-7**) Should our response be the same no matter which political party holds power? Why would God allow people with evil agendas to be in power?
2. What should the God given role of governing authorities be? (**See 1 Pet. 2:13-14**) Does it always happen? According to Peter, how does God want us to live our lives as Christians? (**See 1 Pet. 2: 15-16**) Does God command us to respect the office even of those who we disagree with politically? (**See 1 Pet. 2:17**)
3. What should we do if we disagree with someone in authority over us? (**See 1 Tim. 2:1-4; Jer. 33:3; 1 Pet. 5:7**) Voting privileges are huge giving the citizens of the United States a voice in government. Why do you think so many Christians choose not to vote? Should they vote? Why or why not? According to the Bible, is there ever a time when believers are to disobey the governing authorities? (**See Ex. 1:15-22; Acts 4:13-22; 5:22-32**)

### **Part III: Separation of Church and State**

1. What is meant by “a State Church”? Name as many State Churches as you can from the history. The separation of Church and State is nowhere spoken of in the United States Constitution, the concept was taken out of a personal letter from then President Thomas Jefferson to a group called the Danbury Baptists. In Jefferson’s letter he included the statement, “wall of separation between church and state.” From this the Supreme Court has taken us to where we are today. Did the Founding Fathers (including Jefferson) intend to remove the God of the Bible from the State? Why or why not?

#### **Part IV: Quotes from our Founding Fathers, Presidents & the early Supreme Court**

1. Discuss how these quotes differ from political thought in the United States of America today:

**John Adams, 1756 (2<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States)** ~ “Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only Law Book, and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited... What a paradise would this region be!”

**Patrick Henry (Founding Father)** ~ “It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here.”

**Samuel Adams declared** as the Declaration of Independence was being signed:

“We have this day restored the Sovereign to whom all men ought to be obedient. He reigns in heaven and from the rising to the setting of the sun, let His kingdom come.”

- **John Quincy Adams (6<sup>th</sup> President of the United States) declared** on July 4, 1821:

“The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity. From the day of the Declaration...they (*The American people*) were bound by the laws of God, which they all, and by the laws of the Gospel, which they nearly all, acknowledge as the rules of their conduct.”

**Benjamin Franklin (Statement made at the Constitutional Convention, June 28, 1789)** ~ “We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that ‘except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it.’ I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.”

**Daniel Webster, 1821** ~ “If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity.”

#### ***Supreme Court Decisions:***

“The plan of education proposed is anti-christian, and therefore repugnant to the law...The purest principles of morality are to be taught. Where are they found? Whoever searches for them must go to the source from which a Christian man derives his faith – the Bible...There is an obligation to teach what the Bible alone can teach... a pure system of morality...” Both in the Old and New Testaments [religious] instruction’s importance is recognized. In the Old it is said, “Thou shalt diligently teach them to thy children,” and the New, “Suffer the little children to

teach them to thy children,” and the New, “Suffer the little children to come unto me for forbid them not...” No fault can be found with Girard for wishing a marble college to bear his name forever, but it is not valuable unless it has a fragrance of Christianity about it.” ~ **U.S. Supreme Court, 1844 – Case of Vidal vs. Girard’s Executors**

“Our laws and our institutions must necessarily be based upon the teachings of the Redeemer of Mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise; and in this sense and to this extent, our civilization and our institutions are emphatically Christian.” ~ **U.S. Supreme Court, 1892**

***Does the following quote sound like a man who wanted to take God out of the State?***

**Thomas Jefferson** ~ “Christianity is the best friend of politics because it is the only religion that changes the heart.”

**WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO OUR NATION?**

***God’s words to Solomon apply equally to us today:***

**2 Chronicles 7:14** ~ “...if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

**Will you spend some time praying for our nation today?**