PROBLEMS
Related to
CHRISTIAN
CIVIL GOVERNMENT

"RIGHTESSNESS EXALTS A NATION, BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE."
PROV. 14:34

WHERE HE BELONGS

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Problems Related to CHRISTIAN CIVIL GOVERNMENT

The following CHRISTIAN AMENDMENT to the Constitution of the United States is the proposed means for giving America a CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT:

1. The preamble of the Constitution shall hereafter read: "We, the people of the United States, DEDICATELY RECOGNIZING THE AUTHORITY AND LAW OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR AND KING OF NATIONS, in order to form a more perfect union ... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

2. This amendment shall not be interpreted as abridging the present rights of religious freedom, freedom of speech and press, and peaceful assemblage, guaranteed by the First Amendment.

3. Congress shall have power, in such cases as it may deem proper, to provide a modified oath or affirmation for citizens whose religious scruples prevent them from giving unqualified allegiance to the Constitution as herein amended.

An acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as Saviour and King, in the Constitution of the United States, will be a fundamental change in our government. It will be a deliberate national profession of faith in and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ as America's Saviour and King. Most of us have made such a profession in our personal life. Do we regret it? Do we urge others to make a similar profession? Why not the country we love?

CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT and INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANITY

For 160 years the exclusion of Christ's authority from our Federal Constitution has gone on doing its silent, powerful work of education. Consequently the prejudice has grown up that God has nothing to do with government, that although Christ may be sovereign in individual life and in our churches, He has nothing to do with social, political and economic life, or with government.

We have almost forgotten that the nation belongs to God, and must give its account to God. God's Word gives laws for nations. It tells of the punishment of nations for their sins, and offers a way of forgiveness. Daniel prayed for such forgiveness for his nation, Isaiah proclaimed it. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God." Psalm 9:17.

Everyone believes in the need for individual conversion to Jesus Christ. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:12.

What will go into that account? Not only what one has done when he is alone, but also what he has done in each of life's relationships. He must give account of what he has done in the home, the church and in the nation. And in this account he must tell what he did to bring these institutions, of which he is a part, into a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

If one should join a church which had no mention of Christ in its creed he certainly would be held accountable for that omission. If one is a citizen of a nation, which has no mention of Christ in its constitution, and he does nothing to try to right that wrong, he will certainly be held accountable for that.

It is not enough merely to work to change the
spirit of the people of the church or the nation. These are each institutions of God. As such they must confess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. Every true Christian will work both at changing the spirit of the people, and at bringing the creed and practice of the institution into line with the commands of God. "By me kings reign and princes decree justice" Proverbs 8:15.

Take the matter of the liquor traffic, for example. We should seek with all our power to convert the drunkard and bootlegger, but we will never be rid of the liquor traffic until Uncle Sam ceases to be a drunkard. As long as Uncle Sam continues to manufacture, license and sell liquor, drinking will continue to increase.

Supposing that at the time we wrote our 21st Amendment, nullifying our 18th, we had written instead this Christian Amendment as our 21st; and then supposing we had had a man at the head of our government such as Moses, do you suppose we would be the liquor debauched nation we are today? Christian government has a tremendous influence upon the lives of the individuals of the nation.

But just as liquor has increased while Uncle Sam remains in the business, just so shall atheism increase while Uncle Sam remains an atheist. The word "Atheist" means "No God", and Uncle Sam, according to the Constitution of the United States, knows no God. "We, the people", as individuals might all be professing Christians, and still Uncle Sam would be an "atheist" as far as our nation as a corporate society is concerned. And "We, the people" as corporate society cannot lift ourselves by our own bootstraps. We need Christian government in America as a vindication of the Christian profession of devout citizens.

II

CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT

and

LEGISLATED CHRISTIANITY

A problem sometimes raised in connection with a Christian government is, "But you cannot legislate Christ!" That is true. Neither a man nor a nation can be made Christian by legislation. But a man may become a Christian by repentance from sin, and by faith in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. If his repentance and faith are sincere, then he will make a public profession of his faith in obedience to Christ's command. If there is no public profession, then the presumption is that the person is not a Christian.

The nation is obligated to obey God's commands as they apply to nations. In order to come to a decision we ask the individual, "Will you accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour?" To bring the nation to accept Him, we ask the nation to make a clear profession of submission to the Lord.

A nation can commit sin and a nation can repent and accept Jesus Christ as its Saviour. If the repentance and acceptance are sincere, then that nation will naturally make a public profession of its faith in Jesus Christ in obedience to the command of Scripture (Matt. 10:32, 33; Psalm 2:10-12). Lacking such a public profession of faith, the presumption is that the nation is not a Christian nation, even though its population may include millions of Christian people. That is the situation in America today. When we reach the point where there is enough Christianity in our national life to result in a public profession of faith by a Christian amendment to our Federal Constitution, it will show that America as a nation has accepted Christ with the heart and confessed Him with the mouth. (Rom. 10:10)

It will not take a large number of Christians to
begin to make this nation Christian. A consecrated minority outweighs an inert majority. The grace of God in a man's heart, even though the spark be small, may subdue the "other law" in his members. Just so the grace of God working through a minority of Christians can be the leaven to bring this nation to Jesus Christ.

How many Christians are praying today, "Lord give us America for thee, or we die"? Ten such souls in Sodom would have saved that doomed city. Hear Jonah as he cries, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed!" and see that city repenting and turning to the Lord. This Movement for a Christian America is a cry to America to repent. If America will repent and accept Jesus Christ as her Saviour, it will not be legislation, but conversion, and a humble confession of faith in her King and Lord.

III

CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT

and RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE

What do we mean by "Rights of Conscience"? Does the individual citizen have more rights than the state itself? Let us suppose that one group says: "Public schools interfere with our rights of conscience". Shall we therefore do away with our public schools? Another group says: "We do not believe in war." Shall we therefore disband our army and navy? Many are unanimously opposed to capital punishment. Shall we therefore forbid the execution of the murderer? In a word, shall we have anarchy, or shall we have the administration of true Christian government? Christianity gives us the true Christian citizen who respects and honors the rights of others; it will also give us the true Christian nation which will maintain and respect the rights of others. National Christianity is the only true balance of liberty and law.

The State has no right to compel a man to be religious or irreligious, but it does have a right to say that his outward conduct, as a citizen, shall be moral and righteous according to the Christian standard. The state has no right to forbid a parent to discipline his child, but it does have a right to protect the child's life, even from its parent. The state has no right to forbid any religious sect from coming into its borders, but it does have a right to forbid religious people to practice polygamy or to throw their children to the flames.

All good laws in our criminal code, such as laws forbidding impurity, theft, murder, drunkenness, etc., are designed to bring men up to the Christian standard. Where do we get our authority for these Christian laws? They come from the Bible. They are religious laws. A celebrated French philosopher said: "For me, a moral without God is a law without a sanction; that is to say, a law that is not a law."

In our schools we recognize the dictionary as authority on the meaning of words. We tell the student in school to do "right". What do we mean by right? According to the dictionary "Right means conformity to the constitution of man and the will of God." It also defines "law" as "The will of God as the supreme moral Ruler", etc. The state which administers justice and right, and punishes all violations of justice and right, must therefore teach its youth what is just and right. Such instruction is the teaching of social morals. These social morals are based on religion and that basic religion is Christianity. To teach true Christian morals, the state must have a true Christian government. This is the right of the state, and it must do this if it is to have a conscience clear before God. So when we talk about the "rights of conscience" let us not forget that the state has some rights as well as the individual.
IV
CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT

and
A UNION OF CHURCH AND STATE

Will Christian civil government unite any church with that government? If so, what church? What church has a monopoly on Christ? The Christian religion is not a monopoly of any one church, or of all the churches put together. The church and the state are both Divine institutions. Each is responsible to God for its character, its policies and its actions, and neither has a right to attempt to control the other. Each has a great influence upon the other, however. A Christian state can be a great help to the church, just as the Christian church can be a great help to the state.

William E. Gladstone said: "It is the duty of the state to make it as hard as possible to do what is wrong, and as easy as possible to do what is right."

Matthew Henry said: "It is not the function of the state to save the people, but it is the function of the state to make an atmosphere in which people can be saved."

If the government would come to the help of the churches in combating the liquor traffic, in stabilizing home life by making more stringent marriage and divorce laws, in overcoming juvenile delinquency by putting moral instruction based on the Bible back into our schools, that would be the proper function of a Christian state.

Look carefully at the hand with which you hold this paper. Look particularly at the thumb and forefinger. Neither one comes out of the other. Both come out of the hand, both obey the hand, both draw their power from the hand. Now the church and the state should both draw their guidance and power from the Lord Jesus Christ, but not from one another. Since the one All-wise Lord directs both, He will inevitably use both for many of the same ends. Both will teach reverence, both will honor the Bible, both will keep the Sabbath, both will meet the problems of juvenile delinquency. But neither will rule the other.

An acknowledgment of Christ in our Federal Constitution would not mean that any church would tell the state what to do. Christian men, chosen for their Christian character and ability as statesmen, would tell the state what to do, and they would rule as statesmen, not as churchmen. These men may be of many religious denominations, but their one business as statesmen would be to know what God would have the state to do. There would be no more union of church and state than right now.

Christ is not bound to work only through the church. Christ wants to work through the state, as well as through the church. Over the church stands Christ. Over the state stands Christ. Only when a church, as an institution, acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ fully and unreservedly, and orders its life accordingly, does it approach the Divine ideal for the church. Also, whenever the state, as a separate institution, acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ fully and unreservedly, and orders its life accordingly, it, too, approaches the Divine ideal for nations.

What would be involved in a union of church and state? It would require the establishment of some ecclesiastical organization as the state church. Let us suppose, for example, that we made the Presbyterian church the state church in America. What would that mean? It would mean that all the property of that denomination would belong to the state. It would mean that the salaries of all the ministers of that denomination would be paid out of the taxes. It would mean the intermingling of the government of the Presbyterian church and
the Constitution of the U. S. A. That is a vastly different thing from having a Christian government and placing Christ at the head of our nation's highest law. There would be no union of church and state if we had a Christian Constitution in our nation; any more than there is union of church and state in the forty-three states where God is already acknowledged in the Constitutions of those states. No man, as he came to office, would be asked anything about his church affiliation. The Constitution of the United States would be before him. It would be a Christian document. The only oath he would be asked to take would be an oath to rule as a Christian statesman. There would be no place whatsoever for ecclesiastical complications.

V

CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT and CHRISTIAN OFFICIALS

If we had good men in office, would that make a Christian government unnecessary? Just what is a good man? Is a man a good man if his Christianity has nothing to do with his business, or his social or political life? What could be a greater incentive and rallying point in electing good men to public office than having a truly Christian government? Would anyone say, "Give me an insurance company managed by good men, and I won't ask for a written signed policy"? Or, "Give us a government administered by good men, and the Bill of Rights can be left out of the Constitution"? No matter how good the men in office, we want those rights drawn in black and white in the Constitution. These are the rights of men. We also need an explicit recognition of God's rights in the Constitution, His right to the allegiance of a nation whose authority comes from God. No matter how good the man in office may be, the Sovereignty of God ought to be acknowledged in black and white in the written law of our land.

On the other hand, what would be the result if we had a Christian government and non-Christian officials were elected to office? Obviously our country is a democracy and our officials are elected by the people. No man can hold office very long without the consent of the people. When we have enough dynamic Christianity to secure a Christian government, we will also have the political energy to secure Christian officials to run that government. So, a Christian government and Christian officials go together.

But if a wicked man should get into office under a Christian government, he would still be under obligation to rule according to a Christian Constitution. It is not expected that this change in our government will make every official, or every citizen, perfect. Christ is recognized in our church creed, but not every official or member of the church is perfect. Christ had a traitor among the twelve, and at one time "they all forsook him and fled". This is not a guarantee of perfection of our officials or of our laws, but it is following the direction of the Bible when it says, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."

A man is not a real Christian until he has made his profession of his faith in Christ; neither is a nation a Christian nation until it professes its faith in Christ. We need Christian Civil Governors; but to have them, we need Christian Civil Government.
VI

CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT and

THE NON-CHRISTIAN CITIZEN

Would an acknowledgment of Christ in our Federal Constitution disfranchise the non-Christian citizen? No; read Section 3 above. Non-Christian citizens would still have the right to vote under a Christian government. Evidently unbelievers are not interfered with in the forty-three states where God is acknowledged in those state constitutions.

But the question may be asked, "Why not leave the Constitution as it is and thus please everybody?" Everyone is not pleased, and most of all Jesus Christ is not pleased. It is impossible for the Constitution to be neutral in respect to Jesus Christ. The notion that a Constitution of civil government can be neutral concerning Christ is a delusion which is based on the false assumption that "religion has nothing to do with politics". Any Christian who is dead in earnest about his religion will never harbor that delusion. He is convinced that his religion—Bible Christianity—has something to do with politics. Any Christian who is dead in earnest about his religion will never harbor that delusion.

Christ has three offices: Prophet, Priest and King. In some of the great revivals of the past special emphasis was laid on the work of Christ as Prophet and as Priest; may it not be that there will yet be a great revival which, while not disregarding his prophetic and priestly work, will stress...
in a special way his office of King. The world is in need of a Ruler. It is in need of someone upon whom it can rely, someone who speaks with authority, and yet who knows the meaning of love and forgiveness. The world has looked everywhere else. Certainly it is time now to turn to Jesus Christ. What better step could be taken by our own beloved United States of America than to be the first modern nation to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and King?

If and when this great goal is attained, it will certainly be accompanied by a revival of true religion. This movement to give Christ the honored place in our nation and in our government is a revival movement from first to last. We are not interested in merely writing a name into our Federated Constitution. It will not be "merely" a name when it is written in. The name of Jesus Christ is "everywhere spoken against". It was in Jesus' day; it is today. Jesus Christ is a divider of people. When He was upon earth He was spilt upon, scourged, and crucified. The world does not love Him any more today than it did then, and there is plenty of opposition to giving Christ this supreme honor in our country.

But this should not deter the sincere Christian from going out to secure this honor for Him. We should be as sincerely desirous of seeing Uncle Sam converted to Jesus Christ as we are of seeing the conversion of our next-door neighbor. Yes, we should be more desirous, for each one of us is a part of Uncle Sam and he is thus actually nearer to us than is our neighbor. When Uncle Sam is converted, it will be a very long step toward the conversion of our neighbor, for the position a government takes on a matter of this kind goes a long way in determining the position of a majority of the people under that government. II Chronicles 15:1 begins out this statement:

  "When we think of an acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as Saviour and King of our nation, one very vivid picture should be in our minds. It should be a picture of Uncle Sam on his knees confessing his sins, and accepting Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord. Then we should think what this would mean in the terms of a real revival of true Bible Christianity all over this nation."

Christian friend, is it worth it? We believe with our whole heart that it is. That is why we want to see in our Federal Constitution an acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For America to have a Christian government does present some problems; but not having a Christian government presents problems a thousand fold more serious.

"FOR THE NATION AND KINGDOM THAT WILL NOT SERVE THEE SHALL PERISH; YEA, THOSE NATIONS SHALL BE UTTERLY WASTED." (Isaiah 60:13)

WHICH DO WE CHOOSE?
GOD'S PLAN FOR
CHRISTIAN CIVIL GOVERNMENT
Romans 13:1-7

1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher pow-
er. For there is no power but of God: the powers
that be are ordained of God.

2. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, re-
sisteth the ordination of God: and they that resist
shall receive to themselves damnation.

3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but
to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the pow-
er? do that which is good, and thou shalt have
praise of the same:

4. For he is the minister of God to thee for good.
But if thou do that which is evil, he a rewarder of
him that doeth evil.

5. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only
for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for
they are God's ministers, attending continually up-
on this very thing.

7. Pay therefore to all their dues: tribute to
whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear
to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

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