

Biblical Qualifications for Civil Government Officeholders

Divine directives—not options that can be pragmatically set aside!

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During the last presidential campaign, several key factors impacted me:

1. During the GOP primaries, national evangelical leaders were almost totally divided among themselves regarding their presidential endorsements. This clearly indicated that they were operating by differing and conflicting standards.
2. When choosing candidates, pragmatism seems to be more important to evangelical leaders than the teaching and application of Scripture.¹
3. The evangelical church does not apply the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture (*sola Scriptura*)² to the areas of civil government and economics. This even applies to those professing commitment to *sola Scriptura*.
4. Much of the “Bible-believing” church (including Christian candidates) stands against the teaching of Scripture in:
 - Looking to the federal government as their political and economic messiah/savior/provider;
 - Supporting socialism or fascism; and
 - Supporting unjust wars of aggression and empire-building.³
5. The Church as a whole has no understanding of the Biblically-separate jurisdictions of the family, the church, and the state. She also is clueless regarding distinguishing between sins and Biblical crimes.
6. Even those Christians who adhere to the general applicability of the moral principles contained in Old Testament civil laws are more than willing to set aside God’s infallible laws and Biblical qualifications for civil magistrates to bow before the altar of pragmatism.
7. Christians who believe the Bible teaches male headship in the home and in the church (called complementarians) will eagerly promote and defend egalitarianism and feminism in the political arena.
8. Conflicting theologies brought diametrically opposing views regarding America’s presumed moral obligation to unconditionally support the nation Israel.

In this article I will outline a small portion of God's standard for the civil arena, i.e., the primary Biblical qualifications for civil magistrates. Every reader must decide for himself or herself whether these qualifications are Divine directives or options that can be pragmatically set aside with impunity. God will judge us all for the decision we make!

Religious qualifications

(a personal relationship with the one, true, tri-personal God, i.e., a Christian⁴)

9. **Fears God/Yahweh** (Ex 18:21; 2 Sm 23:3; 2 Ch 19:7, 9; Ps 2:10–12; cf. Lk 18:2, 6).

Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as **fear God**, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:21).

The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the **fear of God**' (2 Sm 23:3).

"Now therefore, let the **fear of the LORD** be upon you; take care and do *it*, for *there is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of bribes." 9 And he commanded them, saying, "Thus you shall **act in the fear of the LORD**, faithfully and with a loyal heart (2 Ch 19:7, 9).

Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with **fear**, And rejoice with **trembling**. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him (Ps 2:10–12).

10. **Trusts the Lord/Yahweh** (Pss 2:10–12; 21:7; Is 33:22).

Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. ... Blessed are all those who put their **trust** in Him (Ps 2:10, 12b).

For the king **trusts** in the LORD, And through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved (Ps 21:7).

For the LORD is our Judge, The LORD is our Lawgiver, The LORD is our King; He will save us (Is 33:22).

11. **Submits to the Lord Jesus Christ** (Ps 2:10–12).

Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him (Ps 2:10–12).

Moral/ethical qualifications

12. **Truth** (Ex 18:21; Pr 16:10; 17:7; 20:28; 29:12, 14; Is 16:5; Zc 8:16).

Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of **truth**, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:21).

Divination [divine decision] is on the lips of the king; His mouth must not transgress in judgment (Pr 16:10).

Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince (Pr 17:7).

Mercy and **truth** preserve the king, And by lovingkindness [*chesed*] he upholds his throne (Pr 20:28).

If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked (Pr 29:12).

The king who judges the poor with **truth**, His throne will be established forever (Pr 29:14).

In mercy the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in **truth**, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness (Is 16:5).

These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the **truth** to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for **truth**, justice, and peace (Zc 8:16).

[Modern politicians are usually professional liars. Judges enact laws through judicial activism, stamping out the original intent of the U.S. Constitution.]

13. **Wisdom** (Dt 1:13; 2 Ch 9:7; Pr 8:12–16; 20:8, 26; contrast Pr 28:16).

Choose **wise, understanding**, and knowledgeable men from among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you (Dt 1:13).

Happy are your [King Solomon's] men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your **wisdom!** (2 Ch 9:7).

I, **wisdom**, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion. 13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate. 14 Counsel is mine, and **sound wisdom**; I am understanding, I have strength. 15 **By me** kings reign, And rulers decree justice. 16 **By me** princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth (Pr 8:12–16).

A king who sits on the throne of judgment Scatters [winnows, separates, roots out] all evil [from his land] with his eyes (Pr 20:8).

A **wise** king sifts out the wicked, And brings the threshing wheel over them (Pr 20:26).

Cp. A ruler who **lacks understanding** is a great oppressor, But he who hates covetousness will prolong his days (Pr 28:16).

14. **Impartial** (Lv 19:15; Dt 1:17; 16:19; 2 Ch 19:6f; Pr 24:23).

You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall **not be partial** to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor (Lv 19:15).

You shall **not show partiality** in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it (Dt 1:17).

You shall not pervert justice; you shall **not show partiality**, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous (Dt 16:19).

and said to the judges, "Take heed to what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. 7 Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD

be upon you; take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, **no partiality**, nor taking of bribes” (2 Ch 19:6–7).

These things also belong to the wise: It is **not good to show partiality** in judgment (Pr 24:23).

15. **Servant** (Ro 13:4, 6).

For he is God’s **minister** to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s **minister**, an avenger to *execute* wrath on him who practices evil. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s **ministers** attending continually to this very thing (Ro 13:4, 6).

16. **Righteous/just** (Dt 16:18, 20; 33:21; 2 Sm 8:15; 23:3; 1 Ki 10:9; 2 Ch 9:8; Ps 45:7; Pr 8:15; 16:12; 17:15; 25:5; 29:2, 4, 27; Is 11:4f; 16:5; 32:1; 51:4; 56:1; Jer 21:12; 22:2–5; Ezk 18:11–13, 15–17).

You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates, which the LORD your God gives you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with **just** judgment. 20 You shall follow what is **altogether just**, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you (Dt 16:18, 20).

He [Moses] **administered the justice of the LORD**, And **His judgments** with Israel (Dt 33:21).

So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and **justice** to all his people (2 Sa 8:15).

The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: ‘He who rules over men must be **just**, Ruling in the fear of God’ (2 Sm 23:3).

“Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do **justice** and **righteousness**” (1 Ki 10:9).

Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you [Solomon], setting you on His throne to be king for the LORD your God! Because your God has loved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to **do justice** and righteousness (2 Ch 9:8).

You [Christ] **love righteousness** and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions (Ps 45:7).

By me [God’s wisdom] kings reign, And rulers decree **justice** (Pr 8:15).

It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, For a throne is established by **righteousness** (Pr 16:12).

He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD (Pr 17:15).

Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in **righteousness** (Pr 25:5).

When the **righteous** are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan (Pr 29:2).

The king establishes the land by **justice**, But he who receives bribes overthrows it (Pr 29:4).

An **unjust** man is an abomination to the righteous, And he who is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked (Pr 29:27).

But with **righteousness** He [Messiah] shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. 5 **Righteousness** shall be the belt of His loins (Is 11:4–5).

In mercy the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking **justice** and hastening **righteousness** (Is 16:5).

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, And rely on horses, Who trust in chariots because they are many, And in horsemen because they are very strong, But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, Nor seek the LORD! (Is 31:1).

Listen to Me, My people; And give ear to Me, O My nation: For law will proceed from Me, And I will make My **justice** rest As a light of the peoples (Is 51:4).

Thus says the LORD: “Keep **justice**, and do **righteousness**, For My salvation is about to come, And My **righteousness** to be revealed (Is 56:1).

‘O house of David! Thus says the LORD: “Execute judgment in the morning; And deliver him who is plundered Out of the hand of the oppressor, Lest My fury go forth like fire And burn so that no one can quench it, Because of the evil of your doings (Jer 21:12).

“and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, you who sit on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates! 3 ‘Thus says the LORD: “Execute **judgment** and **righteousness**, and deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do no wrong and do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. 4 “For if you indeed do this thing, then shall enter the gates of this house, riding on horses and in chariots, accompanied by servants and people, kings who sit on the throne of David. 5 “But if you will not hear these words, I swear by Myself,” says the LORD, “that this house shall become a desolation”” (Jer 22:2–5).

And does none of those duties, But has eaten on the mountains Or defiled his neighbor’s wife; 12 If he has oppressed the poor and needy, Robbed by violence, Not restored the pledge, Lifted his eyes to the idols, Or committed abomination; 13 If he has exacted usury Or taken increase—Shall he then live? He shall not live! If he has done any of these abominations, He shall surely die; His blood shall be upon him. 14 “If, however, he begets a son Who sees all the sins which his father has done, And considers but does not do likewise; 15 Who has not eaten on the mountains, Nor lifted his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, Nor defiled his neighbor’s wife; 16 Has not oppressed anyone, Nor withheld a pledge, Nor robbed by violence, But has given his bread to the hungry And covered the naked with clothing; 17 Who has withdrawn his hand from the poor And not received usury or increase, But has executed My judgments And walked in My statutes—He shall not die for the iniquity of his father; He shall surely live! (Ezk 18:11–17).

17. **Keeps God’s law** (Dt 17:18–20; Jos 1:7f; 1 Ch 28:7; Pr 28:4).

“Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this **law** in a book, from *the one* before the priests, the Levites. ¹⁹ “And it shall be with him, and he shall **read** it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his

God and be careful to **observe** all the words of this **law** and these statutes,²⁰ “that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment *to* the right hand or *to* the left, and that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel (Dt 17:18–20).

“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to **do** according to all the **law** which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 “This Book of the **Law** shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall **meditate** in it day and night, that you may observe to **do** according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success (Jos 1:7–8).

‘Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, if he is steadfast to **observe My commandments** and **My judgments**, as it is this day’ (1 Ch 28:7).

Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, But such as keep the law contend with them (Pr 28:4).

18. **Hates dishonest gain/bribes** (Ex 18:21; Dt 16:19; 27:25; 2 Ch 19:7; Pr 19:6; 17:23; Jer 22:17; contrast Pr 29:4; Mt 28:12; Ac 24:26).

You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality, nor take a **bribe**, for a **bribe** blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous (Dt 16:19).

‘Cursed is the one who takes a **bribe** to slay an innocent person.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’ (Dt 27:25).

Now therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care and do it, for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, no partiality, nor taking of **bribes** (2 Ch 19:7).

Many entreat the favor of the nobility, And every man is a friend to one who gives gifts (Pr 19:6).

A wicked man accepts a **bribe** behind the back To pervert the ways of justice (Pr 17:23).

Yet your eyes and your heart are for nothing but your covetousness, For shedding innocent blood, And practicing oppression and violence (Jer 22:17).

The king establishes the land by justice, But he who receives **bribes** overthrows it (Pr 29:4).

Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, **hating covetousness**; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:21).

Biblical examples:

When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, 13 saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’ 14 “And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you secure.” 15 So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day (Mt 28:12–15).

Meanwhile he [Roman procurator, Felix] also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him (Ac 24:26).

[Today, bribes are often camouflaged as “campaign contributions” or lucrative job offers after leaving their government job. Cp. Lk 16:1–9.]

19. **Hates covetousness** (Ex 18:21; Pr 28:16).

Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, **hating covetousness**; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:21).

A ruler who lacks understanding is a great oppressor, But he who **hates covetousness** will prolong his days (Pr 28:16).

[This precludes those with socialist tendencies—including Christian socialists. Socialism is the politics of covetousness.]

20. **Integrity** (1 Ki 3:6; 9:4–5; Pr 29:10).

And Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in **uprightness of heart** with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day” (1 Ki 3:6).

“Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in **integrity of heart** and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’” (1 Ki 9:4–5).

The bloodthirsty hate the blameless, But the upright seek his well-being (Pr 29:10).

21. **Faithful** (2 Ch 19:9; Pr 20:28; Is 1:26; 16:5).

And he commanded them, saying, “Thus you shall act in the fear of the LORD, **faithfully** and with a **loyal** heart (2 Ch 19:9).

Mercy [*chesed*] and truth preserve the king, And by **lovingkindness** [*chesed*] he upholds his throne (Pr 20:28).

“I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the **faithful** city” (Isa 1:26).

In **mercy** [*chesed*] the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness (Is 16:5).

22. **Humble/teachable** (Pr 17:7; 25:6, 12; cf. Dt 17:19–20).

Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince (Pr 17:7).

Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great (Pr 25:6).

Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold Is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear (Pr 25:12).

23. **Courageous** (Dt 1:17; Jos 1:6–7, 9; 1 Ch 22:13; 2 Ch 19:11).

You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall **not be afraid** in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it (Dt 1:17).

“Be strong and of good **courage**, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 “Only be strong and **very courageous**, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 9 “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good **courage; do not be afraid**, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” (Jos 1:6–7, 9).

“Then you [King Solomon] will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good **courage**; do not fear nor be dismayed” (1 Ch 22:13).

Behave **courageously** [judges], and the LORD will be with the good (2 Ch 19:11).

24. **Self-controlled and patient** (Pr 25:28, 15).

Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls (Pr 25:28).

By long **forbearance** a ruler is persuaded, And a gentle tongue breaks a bone (Pr 25:15; importunate widow in Lk 18:2–6).

25. **Not drunkard** (Pr 31:4f).

It is not for kings, O Lemuel, *It is* not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; ⁵ Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted (Pr 31:4–5).

Family qualifications

26. **Husband of one wife** (Dt 17:17; Pr 31:23; cp. 1 Tim 3:2).

Practical qualifications

27. **Able** (Ex 18:21, 25) and **knowledgeable** (Dt 1:13).⁵

Moreover you shall select from all the people **able** men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:21).

And Moses chose **able** men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people: rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:25).

Choose wise, understanding, and **knowledgeable** men from among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you (Dt 1:13).

28. **Elders/mature leaders** (Nu 11:24f).

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD, and he gathered the seventy men of the **elders** of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. 25 Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and

placed the same upon the seventy **elders**; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again (Nu 11:24–25).

29. **Uses good advisors** (Pr 11:14; 25:5; 2 Sm 8:15–18 24:2–4; Ps 101:4–7).

Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of **counselors** there is safety (Pr 11:14).

Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in righteousness (Pr 25:5).

So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and justice to all his people. 16 Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder; 17 Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests; Seraiah was the scribe; 18 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief ministers (2 Sm 8:15–18).

So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, “Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that I may know the number of the people.” 3 And Joab said to the king, “Now may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?” 4 Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel (2 Sm 24:2–4).

A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness. 5 Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure. 6 My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land, That they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, He shall serve me. 7 He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence (Ps 101:47).

The above characteristics are very similar to God's requirements for church elders (1 Tim 3:2–7; Tit 1:5–9), which makes perfect sense, since civil magistrates are repeatedly called “elders” in the Old Testament.⁶

Biological qualification

30. **Male** (Ex 18:21; Nu 11:24f; Dt 1:13; 17:14–20; 2 Sm 23:3; cf. 1 Cor 11:3ff; Gn 2:18, 23;⁷ 3:16;⁸ Is 3:12; Pr 31:23).⁹

Moreover you shall select from all the people able **men**, such as fear God, **men** of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens (Ex 18:21).

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD, and he gathered the seventy **men** of the **elders** of the people and placed them around the tabernacle. 25 Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again (Nu 11:24–25).

Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable **men** from among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you (Dt 1:13).

“When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,’ 15 “you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your **brethren** you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your **brother**. 16 “But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’ 17 “Neither shall **he** multiply **wives for himself**, lest **his** heart turn away; nor shall **he** greatly multiply silver and gold for **himself**. 18 “Also it shall be, when **he** sits on the throne of **his** kingdom, that **he** shall write for **himself** a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. 19 “And it shall be with **him**, and **he** shall read it all the days of his life, that **he** may learn to fear the LORD **his** God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 “that **his** heart may not be lifted above **his brethren**, that **he** may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that **he** may prolong **his** days in **his** kingdom, **he** and his children in the midst of Israel (Dt 17:14–20).

The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me: ‘**He** who rules over men must be just, Ruling in the fear of God (2 Sm 23:3).

But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, **the head of woman is man**, and the head of Christ is God (1 Cor 11:3).

And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** comparable to him” (Gn 2:18).

[The family is a creation ordinance (Gn 2:24); church and state derived from the patriarchal family.]

You will want to **control your husband** (Gn 3:16 NET).¹⁰

As for My people, children are their oppressors, And **women rule** over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, And destroy the way of your paths” (Is 3:12).¹¹

Her **husband** is known in the gates, When **he** sits among the **elders** of the land (Pr 31:23).

Meditate on the political implications of these verses

“Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, But such as keep the law contend with them” (Pr 28:4). [Example: presidential endorsements made by antinomian evangelical leaders.]

“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law” (Pr 29:18). [Without God’s absolute standard everyone does what is right in his own eyes (cp. Jdg 17:6; 21:25; Dt 12:8).]

When God’s law is not applied, obeyed, and enforced “justice never goes forth” but “perverse judgment proceeds” (Hab 1:4; contrast Heb 2:2).

“Ephraim is oppressed *and* broken in judgment, because he willingly walked by *human* precept” (Ho 5:11 NKJ).

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you. ... Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children” (Hos 4:6).

Cunning, evil rulers “cause deceit to prosper” under their rule (Dn 8:25).

God compares evil officials to roaring lions and evil judges to ravenous wolves that completely devour their prey (Zp 3:3).

Similarly, Christ exposed evil leaders who “devour widows’ houses (Mt 23:14 // Mk 12:40 // Lk 20:47).

Evil civil magistrates oppress a man and his household by coveting and seizing his field, his house, and his inheritance (Mc 2:2; cf. 1 Ki 21).

Warmongering, empire-building nations fight “to possess dwelling places *that are* not theirs” (Hab 1:6; cf. Dt 2:5, 9, 19; 2 Ch 25:19; Pr 26:17). God will “scatter the peoples that delight in war” (Ps 68:30).

God curses every thief and his household (Zc 5:3–5; Hab 2:9), even declaring, “The one who accumulates what does not belong to him is as good as dead” (Hab 2:6 NET).

When God’s covenant people “walked in the statutes of the nations” (because they “feared other gods”) God sent them into exile as slaves (2 Ki 17:7f; cf. Mc 6:16 “the statutes/regulations of Omri”).

‘Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’ (Dt 27:26).

[All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.]

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Adapted from Robert E. Fugate, *Key Principles of Biblical Civil Government* (Omaha, NE: Thy Word Is Truth Publishers, 2007), pp. 67–68

Endnotes

1 Pragmatism inevitably involves putting one's confidence in man rather than putting faith in God (Jer 17:5, 7; Ps 146:3; 20:7; 118:8).

2 The doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture teaches everything that is essential for faith and life (i.e., for salvation, for trusting God perfectly, and for obeying Him perfectly). Thus, the Bible instructs people how to please God in all areas of life. In terms of epistemology, God's Word is truth (Jn 17:17), and it reveals the foundational axioms by which we can make sense out of any and every area of life.

3 One exasperated Baptist wrote, "The leadership of the Christian Right...love centralization more than federalism. I think they love political power more than liberty. I think they love war more than peace. I think they love politicians more than principles. I think they love faith-based socialism more than the free market. And I think they love the state more than God Almighty" (Laurence M. Vance <http://www.lewrockwell.com/vance/vance109.html>).

4 "If civil rulers are required to be those that fear God, then it must logically follow that Christians must not put anyone into office if they do not fear God. This means that we cannot even vote for non-Christians who may share conservative, anti-abortion, free-market values with us" (Daniel F.N. Ritchie, *A Conquered Kingdom: Biblical Civil Government*, p. 629). "In addition to being a Christian man...a civil ruler must be a baptized, communicant member of an orthodox [Trinitarian] Protestant church. ... If he comes under church discipline, then he is automatically disqualified from office" (pp. 633f; cf. Gary North, *Political Polytheism*, pp. 70, 594).

5 They must have proven themselves to be wise, able, and knowledgeable men of understanding in others areas of life prior to holding civil office (Daniel F.N. Ritchie, *A Conquered Kingdom: Biblical Civil Government*, p. 629). "They should have proved themselves in some form of enterprise. The implication is that they are not to be professional politicians" (Gary DeMar, *God and Government*, 1:95 [2001 edition; p. 85 in 1982 edition]). A university degree and work experience with a political party are not adequate.

6 In the Old Testament, the term "elders" almost always denotes civil magistrates (Robert E. Fugate, "Elders in the Old Testament and in New Testament Judaism").

7 Regarding the authority involved in naming see Robert E. Fugate, "The Concept and the Authority of Fathers in the Bible," p. 4.

8 "You will want to control your husband" (Gn 3:16 NET). The same Hebrew word translated "control" is used with this meaning in Gn 4:7. See Susan T. Foh, "What is the Woman's Desire?" WTJ 37 (1975): 376-83.

9 William O. Einwechter, "Should Christians Support a Woman for the Office of Civil Magistrate?" Chalcedon Report # 368 (March 1996) pp. 20-22, [available at: http://darashpress.com/articles/should-christians-support-woman-office-civil-magistrate](http://darashpress.com/articles/should-christians-support-woman-office-civil-magistrate) and http://www.visionforumministries.org/issues/ballot_box/should_christians_support_a_wo.aspx. Einwechter, "The Palin Predicament Resolved," available at <http://darashpress.com/articles/palin-predicament-resolved>.

10 The same Hebrew word translated "control" is used in Gn 4:7. Susan T. Foh, "What is the Woman's Desire?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 37 (1975): 376-83.

11 Childish rulers who are ruled by women are a judgment from God (Ec 10:16; Is 3:4f, 12). The Lord Jesus described the tetrarch Herod Philip as a vixen (female fox) (Lk 13:31f), thereby acknowledging that Herod was dominated by his unlawful wife Herodias, the same woman who had demanded the head of John the Baptizer (Greg L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics*, p. 380).