



# The Resolved Church

***Pastoral Thoughts on Politics***  
by Pastor Duane Matthew Smets

## Biblical Government - *Theocracy*

1 Samuel 8:7 "The LORD said to Samuel...they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them."

The Biblical worldview combined with the common grace of general revelation teaches man that God is King and ruler over the earth and that mankind ought to worship and serve him as governing King over our lives, families, and societies.

## Biblical Theocrat - *Jesus is King*

John 18:37 "Then Pilate said to him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.'"

For Christians, Jesus is our God and King and we listen to his voice. Jesus clearly demonstrated and stated that he is king, regardless of whatever current men may be ruling in a particular geographical local or country.

## The Dual Advent of King Jesus - *A Kenotic Incarnation*

Philippians 2:5-8 " Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

In Jesus' first coming he refrained from displaying his military power and political glory in order to live a perfect life and die for those he came to save.

## The Dual Advent of King Jesus - *A Triumphant Parousia*

Matthew 24:29-31 "...the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

In Jesus' second coming he will fully display his military power and political glory, defeating all nations and rulers, and setting up his physical kingdom (Rev 20-21).

## Pre-parousia Methodology of Jesus - *An Apolitical Ministry*

Luke 20:25;23:2 "He (Jesus) said to them, '...render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' ...And they began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.'"

Jesus ministry method was apolitical, pacifistic, placating the current non-Christocrat government. Jesus instead put his focus and energy in the preaching, teaching, and training people about the Kingdom of God.

## Pre-parousia Methodology of Jesus' Church - *The Apostles' Imitation*

1 Timothy 2:1-3 "I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior."

The apostles consistently replicated Jesus' approach toward the given political government of the day and were martyred not for attempting to change or take over the government but for preaching that Jesus rose from the dead.

## Misc. Issues - *Laws of the land and voting*

### Regarding Law

1. Christians are to abide by the laws of the land, in so far as the laws allow us the freedom to worship Jesus and spread his mission (Dan. 3:18; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7).
2. Christians are to be subject, *hupotasso* (Gk. subordinate, not contentious or rebellious) to the administrators of justice in the land (Rom. 13:1-7). This means, "Don't run from the cops and the IRS!" And it also means if there is a law one disagrees with, one must work within the legal system to change it even it means suffering injustice.

### Regarding Voting

1. The Bible nowhere commands Christians to vote and one is not required by law to vote. Democratic systems like the U.S. and others did not exist in Bible times and therefore one cannot superimpose a democratic worldview onto the Bible and hypothesize what the Biblical writers would say about it. Building a theology based on speculation is not wise. Thus, it is wrong for Christians to put a moral obligation and/or ethical responsibility on other Christians to vote when the Bible (our base for ethics) is silent on the issue.
2. Christian's main goal is to be about the mission of Jesus. The mission is the gospel in the message of the kingdom of God. Until Jesus returns, we are to follow Jesus' and the Apostles' apolitical example of ministry method. If churches get heavily into current politics it sends a mixed message to the individuals and cities Jesus' church is on mission for.
3. Christians must beware of getting distracted from putting a false hope for peace, joy, and justice in any other government but a theocracy where Jesus rules as King. All governments will fail and to become passionately devoted to a particular political party and/or system becomes spiritual treason to the theocracy of Christians who belong to the Kingdom of God.

4. It may be wise for Christians to vote if the culture of the land they are living in is a voting culture and it will help to understand and build a bridge with the people we are living for. Yet this decision is up to the individual's choice and conscience as the Holy Spirit guides them in their incarnational evangelism. God may move upon certain individuals to try and reach people who are anarchists and it could be wise for them to dismiss voting in order to reach them.

5. Christian involvement in other political sectors such as government, military, elections, etc. is acceptable as long as the main goal is to put the gospel on display to the people they work with. In addition, it is good for Christians to work to uphold universal moral law, as long as Christians are careful not to attempt to legislate Christian beliefs.

6. Christians should live their lives in light of the Bible regardless of wherever they live and whatever is happening within the political sphere of the country they live in. A real and lasting difference is made in a city by the quality of Christians' lifestyle before friends, neighbors and co-workers and not through political involvement and/or influence.

7. Christians are commanded by Scripture to abide by the laws of the land (Rom 13:1). Section 501(c)(3), Part VIII, of the Internal Revenue Code, forbids a Religious Non-Profit Organization, to "Support or oppose candidates in political campaigns in any way." OR "Attempt to influence legislation." Thus, it is illegal within the U.S. for a church to encourage its members to support or oppose elections or legislation in any way.

### *Conclusion*

In light of the above sentiments, **The Resolved Church**, which God has called me to lead, is committed to being about the gospel, always trumpeting our allegiance to the Kingdom of God in Christ. We commit to praying for the people, leaders, and way of life in San Diego. We commit to living godly, law-abiding lives. We commit to being apolitical in our collective church endeavors.

For further reading:

"The Gospel of the Kingdom" by George Eldon Ladd  
"A New Testament Theology" by George Eldon Ladd

Helpful articles:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theonomy>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_Reconstructionism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Reconstructionism)