



Scriptures and Doctrine :: American or Christian?

American or Christian? - posted by fieldlaborer, on: 2010/2/22 13:21

(http://www.voe.org/index.php?optioncom_wrapper&viewwrapper&Itemid91) Perry Stone

I was watching Perry Stone's MannaFest broadcast and heard him say there are times we need separate being a Christian from being an American. Something seems wrong with that statement, what do you think?

Re: American or Christian? - posted by fieldlaborer, on: 2010/2/22 13:45

Note: You have to watch the video to see the context the statement is made in. I took it as him saying there are times we need to lay our Christianity aside to be an American.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2010/2/22 13:51

Quote:
-----I was watching Perry Stone's MannaFest broadcast and heard him say there are times we need separate being a Christian from being an American. Something seems wrong with that statement, what do you think?

Actually I believe he is wrong. We have to 100% of the time realize we are not american, canadian or any other country are allegiance is the kingdom of God. God is not here to bless our countries because we as Christians are in them but His heart is for His Church (spiritual).

Jesus said my "kingdom is not of this earth." - That is the kingdom we are a part of.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2010/2/22 14:00

Quote:
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Greg I agree with you completely. I am a Christian who happens to live in the United States while I am here. I am not a Christian first and American second(for me this is a divided heart) I am a Christian first and last, I happen to be occupying space in the US until the Lord calls me to be with Him. While here I will obey the laws of the land and pray for those around me and who are in position of authority but for me I want to be about His Kingdom, that is my home, my native land:)

God Bless
maryjane

Re: American or Christian? - posted by iansmith (), on: 2010/2/22 16:01

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

I was born in America, but my citizenship is in heaven! We will not be singing 'God bless America' around the throne; instead we will be crying out "Holy is the Lamb that was slain!"

We need to stop making our nation or political parties into idols. American Evangelicalism has been hijacked by a politic

al party and has hindered the church from being an effective witness in these dark times.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/2/22 16:44

Hello...

I believe that we can be a Christian AND an American...just like I can be a father/husband and a son/brother.

The same man who said:

Quote:
-----**But our citizenship is in heaven**, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

...also said...

Quote:

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?
26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.
27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, **Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.**
28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.
29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

Acts 22:25-29

Paul stated emphatically that he was a Roman citizen. Yet, he was the apostle that took the Gospel to the Gentiles throughout the "Roman world."

Our allegiance, of course, is to God first. However, God has, in His good purpose, allowed us to be born in the nation of our temporary citizenship. I can do the work of an evangelist in this temporary citizenship even as I hold a secular job in order to take care of the needs of my family, the poor and those in the Body of Christ. Ultimately, my desire as a Christian in America is not that people sing *God bless America* -- but to get people in America to choose to bless God.

Personally, I see nothing wrong with paying my taxes...driving on roads paid for by taxes...or petitioning elected officials in the government (or even unjust judges) about how they might better spend those taxes. I do not believe that this is "unspiritual" (in a sinful sense of the word) any more than it is a civil duty as I realize that God raises up nations, governments and principalities as a "minister of God to thee for good" (Romans 13:4-5).

There is a danger of making an idol out of political systems...or political parties. However, there is also a danger of raising a voice in error too. We need to pray to God for the wisdom on when and how to speak or recognize such things. After all, we are pilgrims and ambassadors of God to this temporary world.

Re: - posted by wind_blows, on: 2010/2/22 16:50

Quote:
-----However, there is also a danger of raising a voice in error too. We need to pray to God for the wisdom on when and how to speak or recognize such things. After all, we are pilgrims and ambassadors of God to this temporary world.

What did you mean by this if you don't mind me asking:)

love in Him
Ellie

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Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2010/2/22 17:00

Hi wind_blows...

There are times in which I have seen fellow believers raise their voices and speak with absolutes in regard to any sort of involvement in the nation of their temporary citizenship. There have even been believers who spoke out against government authorities -- even to the extent of dismissing the faith of men or women who work in government.

Is this what God has called us to?

If we are going to lift our voices as the Spirit leads...and indicate our words as such...then we need to make certain that it is the Spirit of God who is actually leading us to speak. This is especially true if we attempt to speak with "spiritual authority" and express such things with in the form of an "absolute."

I hope that this clears up what I meant a little better. We should not be afraid of speaking out in regard to the Truth. However, we should still be "slow to speak" when it comes to things that might have a little of our own intellect mingled in those words. We must be able to distinguish between the holy and the profane.

Re: , on: 2010/2/22 17:54

Sermonindex writes.....

"Actually I believe he is wrong. We have to 100% of the time realize we are not american, canadian or any other country are allegiance is the kingdom of God. God is not here to bless our countries because we as Christians are in them but His heart is for His Church (spiritual).

Jesus said my "kingdom is not of this earth." - That is the kingdom we are a part of."

Amen brother.....Frank

Re: , on: 2010/2/22 17:56

iansmith writes.....

"I was born in America, but my citizenship is in heaven! We will not be singing 'God bless America' around the thrown; instead we will be crying out "Holy is the Lamb that was slain!"

We need to stop making our nation or political parties into idols. American Evangelicalism has been hijacked by a political party and has hindered the church from being an effective witness in these dark times."

Amen brother, I totally agree.....Frank

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2010/2/22 18:02

Greetings Chris

When I wrote in my post I was speaking about myself and my own personal view. I just wanted to make sure that was clear and that I did not make anyone feel as if I was laying this personal conviction of mine at their door.

God Bless
mj

Re: American or Christian?, on: 2010/2/22 20:11

Q. American or christian?

A. I'm both..... y'know that word both is interesting. The origin of words is always interesting to me.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2010/2/22 21:05

Hi Sister MaryJane...

No problem here, sister. I wasn't referring to you (or anyone in particular) when I wrote this. I was merely replying to the question in regard to whether or not we can retain an earthly citizenship while living, moving and having our being under our preeminent heavenly citizenship.

When asked, Paul invoked his temporary, earthly citizenship. However, he also proclaimed his eternal citizenship. I find nothing in Scripture that indicates he was wrong in doing this.

Our allegiance, of course, is to our Lord. However, we still live in this present "secular" world. Many of us have jobs...pay taxes...and endeavor to provide for our families (and churches, missionaries, the poor, etc...) here. The New Testament is clear that God raises up nations and authorities as "ministers of God to thee for good" (Romans 13).

Thank you for your words, sister. I hope that you know that I wasn't referring to you or anyone in particular. I just wanted to share my view where I think that we can serve God...pay our taxes and, like the persistent widow, still petition the governors of this secular world.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/2/22 21:30

In these discussions I am always quickly reminded of

(<http://whatsthedealwithstuff.blogspot.com/2008/12/christ-culture-niebuhr.html>) Reinhold Niebuhr's 5 Christ/Culture models:

1. Christ AGAINST culture (rejection)

Christ and culture are in direct opposition to each other (= enemies). Therefore, Christians need to fight against/escape from the evils of non-Christian culture, in order to reject 'worldliness' altogether. Engagement with non-Christian culture should be minimised, and where possible completely avoided. Eg. Tertullian, Tolstoy, most separatist movements (eg. monastic orders), sects (eg. closed brethren, the Amish and Mennonite communities) and cults (eg. JW's).

2. Christ OF culture (assimilation)

Christ and the best of culture are in agreement with each other (= friends). Christians should embrace the good of non-Christian culture, blending in (= incarnating the gospel) as much as possible with the non-Christian world in order to love others. Eg. most Liberal churches and some parts of the Emerging Church movement.

3. Christ ABOVE culture (synthesis)

Christ is spiritually above and over culture. Therefore Christians should neither reject nor accept non-Christian culture completely. Rather Christians should seek in this life to synthesise their heavenly, Christian lives with their earthly, cultural lives. Eg. Aquinas, most conservative Catholic and Protestant churches (esp. seeing evangelism as the only real connection between Christ and culture), early apologists.

4. Christ and culture in PARADOX (dualism)

Christ and culture are spiritually divided and cannot be synthesised in this life. Therefore Christians face a tension (only to be resolved with Jesus return) in belonging to this world, and yet belonging at the same time to the world to come. Eg. Luther (and his doctrine of two kingdoms), Lutheranism, Roger Williams.

5. Christ TRANSFORMING culture (conversion)

Culture is sinful, but can be transformed by Christ. Therefore, culture is something that needs Christians and the transforming power of the gospel to redeem. Christians are to engage culture in order to bring about its transformation. Eg. Calvin (and his optimism towards social reform), Augustine, most social action and liberation theology movements.