

Our 40 Day Journey to the Cross
March 17-22
Day 15 Friday

Separation Of Church And State
Mark 12:17 ESV

Jesus said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.” And they marveled at him.

1 Peter 2:13-17

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,
14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—

16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Romans 13:1-7 NKJV

1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

4 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.

5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Religion, Politics, and Public Policy in America

“Religion” is one of the most powerful--yet least understood--forces in American public life. Two centuries ago the U.S population was predominantly white, from the United Kingdom, and 90% Protestant Christian; today America is multicultural, multiracial, and less than 50% Protestant. Yet, unique among advanced nations, Americans still remain highly religious – almost 90% say they “believe in God”.

Moreover, amidst its diversity, distinct and stable religious/cultural/racial/regional "blocs" persist, with patterns of personal beliefs and political values that influence everything from where we live and who we marry, to our policy debates and our presidential choices.

Why have some denominations grown while others have declined, and how issues -- from 19th century struggles over slavery's abolition, temperance, public education, and women's suffrage, right on up to today's fiercely-fought quarrels about race, homosexuality, abortion, welfare reform, economic justice, and the environment-- have all been (and are being) consciously and unconsciously shaped by Americans' religious identities and values. If the history of religion's influence is coming to an end -- what might replace it?

(Richard Parker, Harvard Lecturer in Public Policy Course DPI-342:)

