

XXIII. The Civil Magistrate

1. *God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil authorities to be, under him, over the people for his own glory and the public good. For this purpose he has armed them with the power of the sword for the defense and encouragement of those who are good, and for the punishment of those who do evil.*

2. *It is lawful for Christians to hold public office when called to it. In such office they ought especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth. For that purpose they may now, under the new testament, lawfully wage war upon just and necessary occasion.*

A. God's dominion

This section on the civil magistrate starts with the ultimate magistrate, God, and defines his kingdom and authority.

What is the source of the authority of the civil magistrate?

B. Civil Magistrate's duties & power

1. Duties

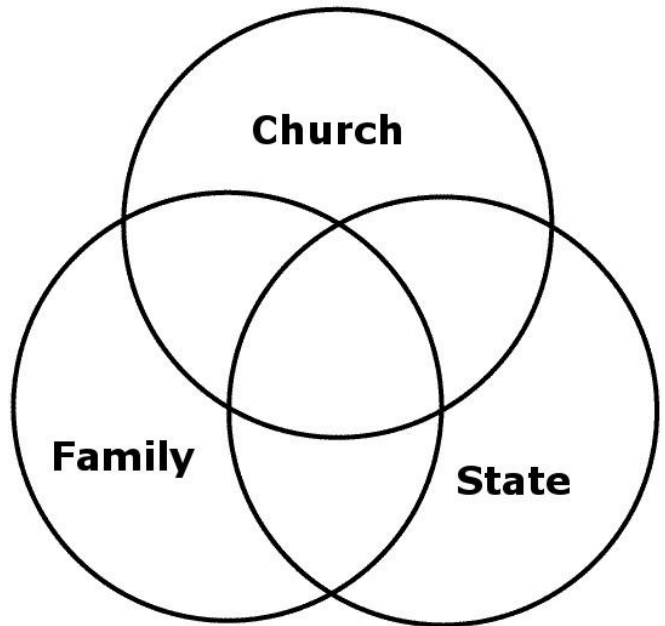
Paragraph 1 details the primary duties of the civil magistrate:

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(Romans 13:1-4)

2. Power of the sword

- War (_____ evil doers)
- Death penalty (_____ evil doers)
 - (Gen. 9:6)
 - (Acts 25:11)
 - Chapter 19 (the Law of God) paragraph 4



C. Christian magistrates

1. Problems with ungodly magistrates

Some responses Christians have had to ungodly governments:

- Withdraw from society and create your own blend of “Christian” government/church/society
- Live with civil governments but refuse to participate as rulers, elected officials, agents, military, etc.
- Only participate in government or political party that is explicitly Christian

2. Christians as godly magistrates

Examples:

Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah. Luke 3:14, Acts 10).

Duties:

- _____
- _____

All governments are God's governments but no nation is God's chosen nation
(Chad Van Dixhoorn in *Confessing the Faith*)

What type of civil government is ordained by scripture?

3. Christian Nationalism

Christian nationalism is a totality of national action, consisting of civil laws and social customs, conducted by a Christian nation as a Christian nation, in order to procure for itself both earthly and heavenly good in Christ.

Stephen Wolfe, *The Case for Christian Nationalism*

Problems with Christian Nationalism:

4. Just war

Pacifism definition

War not necessarily in conflict with Christianity

What are those “just” and “necessary” occasions?

Just:

Necessary: