

In and Out
#8: In the State, But Not of It
June 30-July 2, 2007

²⁰Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. ²²Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” ²³He saw through their duplicity and said to them, ²⁴“Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. ²⁵He said to them, “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” ²⁶They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent. *Luke 20:20-26 TNIV*

¹Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ²Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. ⁴For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. *Romans 13:1-5 TNIV*

²⁷The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. ²⁸“We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.”

²⁹Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings!” *Acts 5:27-29 TNIV*

For why is my freedom being judged by another’s conscience? . . . It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

1 Corinthians 10:29b and Galatians 5:1 TNIV

Introduction: Perhaps the most pressing issue facing believers who live in our culture is how to live “in the world, but not of it.” This is especially true for a church like Columbia in a place like Washington. In a time when the respective roles

of church and state are continually debated, it is important that we know how to live “in the state, but not of it.”

- I. American Historical Context
 - A. There is no doubt that religion was a significant influence on our nation’s founders.
 - B. The founders adopted religious freedom as a matter of both pragmatism and principle.
 - C. “Protecting the garden of the church from the wilderness of the world.” Roger Williams, 1636
 - D. “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, 1791
 - E. “. . . thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.” President Jefferson’s response to the Baptists of Danbury, Connecticut, 1801
 - F. Due process and equal protection. The 14th Amendment, 1868.
- II. Unique Roles
 - A. Government is established to protect and preserve the rule of law within sovereign states.
 - B. The church is established to preserve and propagate faith in God through Jesus Christ.
 - C. Scripture commands that we submit to governmental authority unless it directly conflicts with our submission to God.
 - D. As Christians, we are citizens of multiple kingdoms.
 - E. The church has a unique prophetic role that must be protected and exercised.
- III. Religious Freedom
 - A. Jesus’ rebellion against compulsory religion.
 - B. Jesus’ acknowledgment of unique roles.
 - C. Our protection of religious freedom.
 - D. Our faithful expression of faith in Christ.

Conclusion: It is precisely because of our freedom in Christ that we must learn to live “in the State, but not of it” in order to be “in the world, but not of it.” We must live boldly as free Christians in a free state.