

**When politics  
drives you**

**cray**

**Remember to keep church and state separate.**

## Six truths about government to remember

ITS EXISTENCE: Every government is established by God.

ITS PURPOSE: Every government works for the good of God's kingdom, knowingly or unknowingly.

ITS TOOLS: The state wields the sword to accomplish its purposes.

ITS METHOD OF RULING: The state uses rewards and punishments to move people to obedience.

ITS SOURCE OF TRUTH: The state governs by natural reason, which is affected by sin.

ITS SURVIVAL: The state rises and falls. The church remains forever.

**Discuss: Where do we see politics and religion being mixed in our culture? In other parts of the world?**

## When politics drives you *crazy*

### Lesson 4

John 18:28-38 (especially 36-38): Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” 37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.” 38 “What is truth?” retorted Pilate. With this he went out again to the Jews gathered there and said, “I find no basis for a charge against him.”

### Discuss:

- Do you think Pilate understood the concept of two kingdoms?
- In what ways are the two kingdoms different?
- How does God’s kingdom differ from the world when it comes to truth?
- When the kingdoms of the world clash with the kingdom of God, who always wins? How did the kingdom of God “win” in this circumstance?

## When politics drives you *crazy*

### Lesson 4

Mark 12:13-17: Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn’t we?” But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

### Discuss:

- What was the trap, and why wasn’t it a valid one?
- What was Jesus’ argument for paying taxes to Caesar?
- What do we owe God—and why?
- How else did Jesus show that he understood the separation of church and state?

## The example of Daniel as a believer in government service

- Daniel 1:8-21: He and his three companions were impressed into royal service. Note how respectfully he worked with the person in charge without compromising his faith and values.
- Daniel 2:17-45ff: How respectfully Daniel speaks to his power-happy king!
- Daniel 6:19-28: Darius was in anguish all night to see if Daniel survived the lion's den! He acknowledged Daniel's God as the living God.
- How does understanding the separation of church and state make us better public servants?



## Discussion

- In what ways do we experience a healthy separation of church and state in our government today?
- What advice would you give to a school teacher in the public school system teaching science or social studies, etc.?
- How would you argue the case for abortion in the church? In the public forum?
- How does this affect the way we perceive elections and how we cast our vote?

# Questions?

Submit follow-up questions at <http://forwardinchrist.net/submit>