A Christian Politic?


- principles related to salvation
- principles related to natural life (or common grace), including public affairs.

He felt that in a democratic society it was appropriate for believers to organize on the basis of Christian principles with a common agenda to protect the Christian basis of society. At the same time, he respected the right of the secularist parties to promote their own agendas.

The basic political clash in parliament was between those who believed that matters of public law must take God Almighty into consideration and those who did not. The state, he insisted, must take into account what the Bible says about the social consequences of sin.

While noting that his was a coalition government between Anti-Revolutionaries (Kuyper’s party) and Catholics, the premier said that each party had an independent existence and constituency. The governing program was a compromise between these two parties to build on the Christian foundations of the nation to meet the needs of the times. Seeking the righteousness of God in public affairs, declared the premier, would lead to national blessing.

Included in this agenda were bills for school reform, which would give full equality (including a voucher system) to Christian and Catholic schools, for liquor law reform to curb drunkenness, for housing codes to promote public health, for social security benefits for and old age, and for tax reform.

Questions for Discussion:
There are two key questions about a Christian politic today:

- limitation of the role of government (i.e. what is the role?)
- and identification of principled directives (policy) that would guide government actions/laws in areas X, Y, Z

Q-1: What is the broad role of government as described in Scripture? The few Biblical texts:

1. God is sovereign and uses governments as part of his rule over history.

Daniel 2:20-21 (New International Version)
20 and said:
"Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his."
21 He changes times and seasons;  
he sets up kings and deposes them.  
He gives wisdom to the wise  
and knowledge to the discerning.

Other examples: Exodus story 6-12; 20-22

2. Civil authority is limited and appropriate submission is expected.  
Romans 13 (NIV)

Submission to the Authorities  
1Everyone must submit himself 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, he who 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 he will commend you. 4For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent 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 because of conscience. 6This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 7Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Q-2: What limitations should government have particularly as it relates to other civil institutions/structures – family; business; church? The question another way: what is the scope of practice of government at local, state, federal level? What Christian foundational principles would support ‘limited roles of government’ (or not) in managing the affairs of society?

Q-3: In what specific arenas could we develop a policy that reflects Christian principles and fosters a ‘social contract’ that promotes justice and creates an environment conducive to sharing the Gospel?

Awright sep 2010