Worldviews  
Mr. Myers

Sociology: Christians and Politics

1. How I believe Christians should relate to government
   1. Christians should respect their government leaders
   2. Christians should submit to their government’s authority unless it requires an action that is contrary to the way of Christ
   3. Christians should pray for their government leaders and witness to them
   4. Christians should pay taxes
2. Why I don’t get involved in politics
   1. Our government requires of its officeholders a primary allegiance; elected officials take an oath to uphold the Constitution no matter what. This essentially requires them to subjugate their commitment to Christ to the commitment to the Constitution. Jesus Christ is the supreme authority in every area of life for the Christian. As His disciple, I may not dilute my allegiance and obedience to Him in any way.
   2. Coercion is the kind of power and the only kind of power that government possesses. All of its power ultimately rests on the gun or the lethal injection, which is contrary to the way of Jesus.
   3. Trying to address moral issues in our society in a political way often turns moral issues into political issues. It becomes a mere plank in somebody’s political platform instead of something for which one has to answer to God.
   4. Becoming involved in one particular country’s political system leads to national self-interest; secular governments seek the best interest of their citizens at the expense of everyone else’s interest. This is not the way of “loving our neighbors as ourselves.”
   5. On not voting
      1. In a representative democracy, the authority of the government is derived from the consent of the people; therefore my vote translates into actual participation in and responsibility for government’s actions. And whether the issue is abortion, war-making, or making US-centered policies, it’s obvious why this is a problem.
      2. Politics are incredibly divisive. Political allegiances create rifts and barriers between people. Even if I don’t take my preference that seriously, other people will react strongly to my position and erect barriers between us. Some people inside Mennonite USA called for a five-year fast from participation in politics after the 2000 presidential election because of the strife created within congregations.
      3. Political allegiances create barriers, hindering the unbiased witness of the Christian; refraining from the political process gives Christians a neutral position from which to relate to people and work on issues (posting political signs or bumper stickers in the “closet” can have the same effect).
      4. Choosing a candidate to vote for in elections would often be the choice between the lesser of two evils
   6. There is a better way; many times, the problems in society can be more effectively addressed and changed through non-governmental actions. The church has the resources to do more for many of the problems in the world than a government agency could do.