Stewards by God's Design: The Three R's of the Christian Steward

Relationships – Responsibilities - Resources

"The doctrine of the two governments (Christian and Secular) maintains when Christians hold office in some form of secular government, their obligation is not to evangelize or Christianize the worldly kingdom but to humanize it. This principle must be upheld even when Christians are motivated by the Gospel to enter public service. Evangelization may only be done on the private level and even then quite apart from the Christian's position as a public servant. To not evangelize in the position of a public servant engaged in his or her work is not denying the Christian's biblical obligation to witness to the Gospel…the Christian as a public servant in government is to serve the public in a civic capacity…However, Christians in the secular sphere can still let their Christian light shine by being morally upright, courteous, patient, and considerate." Alvin Schmidt in *Hallmarks of Lutheran Identity*. Page 242.

My Responsibilities in Society

God created us to live in community. The forgiveness we have in Christ frees us to serve our neighbors in society. This order also includes government and how we, as stewards, are involved in this important part of society.

Robert Kolb and Charles Arand write in *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, "Good government (politics and citizenship) protects the peace, punishes crime, promotes the common good, and supports the church, family, and other institutions. In the twenty-first century we would expand this to include the public life of citizenship and voluntary associations. This order also includes voluntary roles, such as coaches and athletes, volunteers in all areas of public service, and other aspects of life, such as friends simply doing things together." Page 62.

In his Small Catechism Martin Luther identifies the following Bible passages in the Table of Duties as they relate to this order. What do each of these passages have to say to our lives as stewards by God's design?

Of Civil Government:

- Romans 13:1-4

Of Citizens:

- Matthew 22:21
- Romans 13:5-7
- 1 Timothy 2:1-3
- Titus 3:1
- 1 Peter 2:13-14

Christians are called to be model citizens. What does a model citizen look like?

In his book, *The Ethics of Martin Luther,* Paul Althaus writes, "The people belong to God. Rulers ought never to forget this and treat the people as though they were their own property. They must view the people in the fear of God and in humility. The people ought to view their rulers in the same way...For the political authorities are also an order created by God." Page 113. How does the fact that we (and the government) belong to God impact how we steward our responsibility to society?

What do the following Bible passages say about government?

- Psalm 22:28
- Job 12:23-24
- Acts 5:29
- Jeremiah 27:9

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