

***GOVERNMENT, A GENERAL
INTRODUCTION FROM A BIBLICAL
PERSPECTIVE***

STUDENT WORKBOOK

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The Puritans' Home School Curriculum
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ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 1

1. Define the term 'government'.
2. According to the Belgic Confession, what is the general purpose of government?
3. According to the Belgic Confession, what is the duty of government with respect to the true church of Christ?
4. An 'established church' is one which the government favors and protects. Do the Belgic and Westminster Confessions indicate that scriptures teach each nation should have an established church?
5. The term 'the Antichrist' has special reference to the Romish Papacy and his church. What does the Belgic Confession suggest the civil magistrate has the duty to do with respect to the Romish Church?
6. According to the Westminster Confession, what is the general purpose of government?
7. Under which conditions may a civil government wage war with other nations, according to the Westminster Confession?
8. How does the Westminster Confession then imply that scripture limits when a civil ruler may declare war upon another nation?
9. What functions of the church may the state not perform, according to the Westminster Confession?
10. What are ways the Westminster Confession suggests that civil government should help the Christian church and its mission?
11. What does not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority according to the Westminster Confession, though it be far from ideal?
12. What does Romans 13:3-4 say civil rulers should punish, thus justifying the positions outlined in the Belgic and Westminster Confessions?
13. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended, according to the Westminster Confession?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 2

1. What is Biblical passage which John Calvin cites to show that power on earth is lodged in kings and other governors by divine ordination?
2. Calvin points out: “Those who are desirous to introduce anarchy object that, though anciently kings and judges presided over a rude people, yet that, in the present day that servile mode of governing does not at all accord with the perfection which Christ brought with his gospel.” How does Calvin scripturally refute this position of “Christian” anarchists?
3. Based upon what Calvin has written in his *Institutes*, how do we know that the secularist model of government up to his day?
4. How does Calvin handle this perplexing question: “If all Christians are forbidden to kill, and the prophet predicts concerning the holy mountain of the Lords that is, the Church, "They shall not hurt or destroy," how can magistrates be at once pious and yet shedders at blood”?
5. What proof does Calvin offer that war is sometimes lawful, borrowing an argument from Augustine?
6. What is the relation between Old Testament law and the laws of nations today, according to Calvin?
7. Did Calvin believe that the civil penalties given to Moses and attaching to certain vices, were intended for requisite adoption by all nations at all times?
8. How does the example of the Apostle Paul contradict those who would argue law courts should be abolished in a Christian society?
9. How should the individual citizen relate to an unjust ruler, according to Calvin?
10. How should we distinguish constitutional defenders of the people (like the Parliament) versus an individual citizen when it comes restraining the tyranny and wickedness of an unjust ruler?
11. What is the limit individual citizens may obey a ruler?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 3

1. George Gillespie lays out three possible opinions concerning the issue of punishment of heretics and sectaries. One possible opinion is that the Magistrate ought not to inflict any punishment, nor put forth any coercive power upon Heretics or Sectaries, but on the contrary grant them liberty and toleration. According to Gillespie's tract, who in his day held to this opinion?
2. On this question of punishment of heretics and sectaries, what opinion does Gillespie show was the "judgment of the orthodox Ancients [and] our soundest Protestant Writers"?
3. How does Gillespie define the terms 'heresy' and 'apostasy', so as to distinguish the two?
4. What punishment is to be meted out according to *Deut.* 13.6-9 to the person who shall secretly entice people, saying, *Let us go after other gods*?
5. How does Gillespie differ from Calvin on the question of civil penalties found in the Mosaic law pertaining to crimes of a moral nature?
6. Even though of different views on the question of civil penalties found in the Mosaic law pertaining to crimes of a moral nature, why is both Gillespie's view and Calvin's view within the bounds of what the Westminster Confession of Faith teaches regarding the punishment of heretics and sectaries? (Note: see Chapter 1 in your textbook for the section in the Westminster Confession that covers the topic.)
7. What Biblical proof is there that sectaries should be punished, but not nearly as severely as heretics?
8. What does Gillespie mean by the term "sectary"?
9. How did Gillespie refute the Parable of the Tares argument that heretics and sectaries should not be punished?
10. How did Gillespie refute the objection of its producing many hypocrites?
11. How does Gillespie distinguish *Toleration* and *Accommodation*?
12. How do you think the Biblical doctrine concerning the duty of the civil magistrate should affect how we vote?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 4

1. Gillespie distinguished three types of covenant leading to alliance. What are those three categories he averred?
2. Why did Gillespie believe a covenant with the wicked to join in military expeditions together is not permissible?
3. How do we know civil covenants, if they be for commerce or peace, are allowed?
4. Ahab's Israel was part of the visible church of the time, but corrupt. What did the prophet Jehu say of the confederacy between Jehoshaphat's Judah and Ahab's Israel?
5. Why are covenants of peace and commerce, even with infidels and wicked persons, allowed, yet military associations with such disallowed?
6. What lesson did Calvin draw from Ezek. 16:26 regarding inappropriate confederacies?
7. What was Asa's experience (recorded in 2 Chron. 16:7-8) as it relates to the issue of confederacies?
8. When Christians politically confederate with heretics and apostates, how does it affect the ability of the government so formed out of the confederacy to carry out its Biblical duty described in this way in the Westminster Confession: "he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire; that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed; all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed; and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed"?
9. How do you think the Biblical doctrine concerning political confederacy should affect our political party membership?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 5

1. What is 'classification'?
2. What is a scriptural support for classification in the sciences?
3. What is 'induction'?
4. What is a scriptural support for induction in the sciences?
5. Suppose we found in scientific studies that certain chemicals released in the air by many factories caused a significant increase in cancer rates to people in the area of such factories. How might such inductive studies be used to shape civil laws concerning release of such chemicals, in application of the Sixth Commandment?
6. In a coming chapter students will examine different forms of government. How does classification come into play in such an examination?
7. In considering the pro's and con's of different forms of government, how can the tool of induction come into play?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 6

1. What is anarchism?
2. Why would a political philosophy like anarchism view government as rooted in deleterious desires such as greed?
3. Which branch of political ideology typically views government as rooted in the human need for order and tradition?
4. Which branch of political ideology typically views government as rooted in the human need for protection of natural rights?
5. What should be our principal objection to humanistic views as to the fundamental reason for civil government?
6. What is the social contract theory?
7. How do we know that government should be organized and administered so as to promote God's glory and man's true welfare?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 7

1. Effective governments possess which two attributes?
2. What is 'authority'?
3. What are some different ways that authority can be attained by one that purports to be 'the government'?
4. What is 'legitimacy'?
5. How is legitimacy gained by one that purports to be 'the government'?
6. Why is secular humanism at such a loss to account for 'legitimacy' with respect to civil government?
7. How does Biblical Christianity account for 'legitimacy' with respect to civil government?

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 8

1. Classified in relation to religion, what are the two basic models of government?
2. What is a 'theocracy'?
3. What does scripture teach on the question of theocratic versus secularist government?
4. What is a hierocracy?
5. Which term describes one who would see the church placed entirely under the control of the State?
6. What relation between Church and State has reformed Christianity historically advocated?
7. Before the last several centuries, which form of government was more widespread: theocratic or secularist?
8. What does 'suffrage' mean?
9. What is a 'democracy'?
10. What is the term for that form of government where most or all political power effectively rests with a small segment of society (typically the most powerful, whether by wealth, family, military strength, ruthlessness, or political influence)?
11. What is that form of government where unlimited political power is held by a single individual?
12. What is the distinction between a federation and a confederation?
13. Is the US currently a federation or confederation?
14. What is a monarch?
15. Which term is used for a nation that is not a monarchy?
16. What is an empire?
17. What is a commonwealth?
18. What is an example of a modern alliance among nations? the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 9

1. Of what does the legislative function consist?
2. Of what does the executive function consist?
3. Of what does the judicial function consist?
4. How does the power of a prime minister in a parliamentary system of government compare with the power of a president in a government with three separate branches?
5. What is a unicameral legislature?
6. What is the bicameral legislature of the United States called?
7. What are the names of the two assemblies of the bicameral legislature of the United States?
8. What does the term 'separation of powers' mean?
9. In what are judges in the judiciary (i.e., the judicial branch of government) trained?
10. What is the last court of a appeal in a state or nation is often called?

RESEARCH PAPER

So far in this course you have studied civics in a general way, without focusing on the government of any particular nation. But each nation has its own unique government, and it is important that we understand the features of our own nation's government. You should study on your own your nation's government, in the light of the general information presented in this course's student textbook. You can use resources from a variety of sources. After you have completed your research, prepare a 3-4 page typewritten paper summarizing what you have learned about your own nation's government and try to analyze its features in the light of Biblical principles with respect to how government should be organized and function.