



# THE FOREST HILL NEWS

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## Forest Hill Church of Christ

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### Elders:

Anthony D. Callahan  
Warren Davenport  
Gregory D. Mangrum  
Harold D. Mangrum  
Keith B. McAlister

### Ministers:

Barry M. Grider,  
Pulpit Evangelist  
Matthew Jones,  
Personal Evangelist  
Jordan Pugh, Youth

### Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.  
Morning Worship.... 10:30 A.M.  
Afternoon Worship.... 1:30 P.M.

### Wednesday:

Bible Study ..... 7:00 P.M.

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### Missions Supported:

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## God, the Founders, and the Purpose of Human Government (Part 1)

Dave Miller

The American people have been experiencing a significant level of confusion regarding the purpose of civil government. Perhaps the prevailing sentiment of the population is that the core purpose of government is to collect money from citizens (via the IRS) so that elected politicians can make decisions regarding the distribution and dispersal of those funds. This serious misconception has led to a plethora of errors and harmful societal circumstances: a bloated, insatiable federal government that is in the throes of unprecedented, debilitating debt, a corresponding failure of elected officials to focus on their **true** purpose, a host of citizens who think the government exists to redistribute monetary assistance to them, and the list goes on. Meanwhile, the **central** purpose of government—the very reason the Founders established a federal government—is being neglected to the extent that citizens are encountering increasing danger to their lives. Perhaps even more tragic, the very government intended to be “of the people, by the people, and for the people” has assumed an adversarial role in which it persecutes those who hesitate to go along with its oppressive socialistic, anti-Christian, “politically correct” agenda.

What’s more, many Americans have been indoctrinated in the public school system with the idea that “separation of church and state” is true, that the government should have nothing to do with religion—except to suppress it in government, school, and public life.<sup>1</sup> This indoctrination is so thorough and pervasive that few consider the fact that God has expressed His view on the subject. Indeed, the sole source of infallibly correct thinking—the Bible—addresses these concerns, articulating very precisely the divine purpose of civil government. What does the inspired Word of God say regarding the purpose of human government?

### THE BIBLE

Perhaps before answering that question, we should ask the prior question: “Did God intend for humans to form a government?” Yes, He did. The Bible states definitively: “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For **there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God**” (Romans 13:1, emp. added). Another inspired apostle stated: “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him” (1 Peter 2:13-14). Jesus, Himself, had previously expressed what His apostles later wrote. He implied the validity of human government when He declared: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mark 12:17). Nebuchadnezzar’s dream included the realization “that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men” (Daniel 4:17). So, yes, human government is authorized and ordained by God and fully in keeping with His principle of authority that pervades all of life.<sup>2</sup>

What, then, does the Bible say about the **purpose** of the divinely authorized entity of human government? The Bible states explicitly that the central purpose and role of government is **to maintain order, peace, protection, safety, and stability in society which, in turn, enables citizens to live their lives in freedom**. Consider, for example, Paul’s lengthy discussion of civil government in his admonitions to Christians in the capital city—the heart—of the Roman Empire:

For rulers are **not a terror to good works, but to evil**. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, **an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil** (Romans 13:3-4, emp. added).

(continued on page 2)

God, the Foundersnnmmmm, and the Purpose of Human Government (continued from page 1)

**Observe:** “a terror to evil works” (vs. 3) and “an avenger to execute wrath on him who does evil” (vs. 4). Peter expressed these same thoughts when he also addressed the subject:

Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him **for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good** (1 Peter 2:13-14, emp. added).

**Observe:** “for the punishment of evildoers” and “praise of those who do good” (vs. 14). Commenting on this passage, Guy N. Woods remarked: “the design, incidentally, of all civil authority—was (a) to punish the wicked, and (b) encourage good works by protecting those engaged therein.”<sup>3</sup> In his remarks to Timothy, Paul again noted this same purpose:

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, **that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life** in all godliness and reverence (1 Timothy 2:1-2, emp. added).

**Observe** again: “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life” (i.e., protected from those who would disturb that peace). Even the pagan attorney Tertullus, who acted on behalf of the high priest in bringing formal charges against Paul before the Roman governor Felix, noted in passing the purpose of civil government:

And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: “Seeing that **through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation** by your foresight, we accept it always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness” (Acts 24:2-3, emp. added).

**Observe:** through the civil magistrate, i.e., the government, “we enjoy great peace, and prosperity,” i.e., we are protected from those who would disrupt the peace, enabling us freely to exercise our right to pursue our vocations and the prosperity such brings. The government does not guarantee, let alone provide, prosperity; it simply ensures a peaceful atmosphere in which citizens can pursue their vocations and earn their living unhampered by thugs, thieves, and other criminals.

Hence, while not discounting subsidiary functions, the Bible states very succinctly that the essential thrust of human government—its core function—is to maintain order, peace, protection, safety, and stability in society so that citizens may be permitted to live their own lives and have the freedom to make their own decisions. This arrangement is God’s will. However, recall again Paul’s words to Timothy:

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life **in all godliness and reverence** (1 Timothy 2:1-2, emp. added).

Why should we pray for the government? So that our lives might be “quiet and peaceable”—the objective and purpose of the government as intended by God. But what is the purpose of having a peaceful, undisturbed, unmolested life?

So that we might live life “in all godliness and reverence.” God wants people to make wise, spiritual decisions as they live their lives in anticipation of eternity. That is their purpose for existence (Ecclesiastes 12:13). But whether they do or don’t, civil government is divinely designed to create an environment where citizens are not molested by internal or external assailants.

### AMERICA’S FOUNDERS

Every American ought to be grateful to live in a country where its Founding Fathers understood God’s view of human government and, consequently, implemented that same view in their efforts to establish the Republic. They were very forthright in their expression of the purpose of government and what they envisioned were the enumerated sub-purposes. Hear them:

Though not an American Founder, the British empiricist philosopher and physician John Locke (1632-1704), widely regarded as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers, exerted a considerable influence on the thinking of the Founders. They certainly agreed with his assessment of the purpose of human government: “The great and chief end, therefore, of men’s uniting into commonwealths, and putting themselves under government, is **the preservation of their property,**” with “property” defined as “their lives, Liberties and estates.”<sup>4</sup> Another Englishman with whom the Founders agreed on this point was British jurist, judge, and politician of the Founding Era Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), most noted for his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* which profoundly influenced the Founders and the formation of American law.<sup>5</sup> He explained: “For the principal aim of society is **to protect individuals** in the enjoyment of those absolute rights, which are vested in them by the immutable laws of nature.”<sup>6</sup>

Apart from these weighty influences, the Founders themselves expressed pointed views of the purpose of government. In a sermon preached in Cambridge before the Massachusetts House of Representatives on May 30, 1770, prominent New England preacher Samuel Cooke pinpointed the true intention of government: “Civil government...the sole end and design of which is...the public benefit, the good of the people; **that they may be protected in their persons,** and secured in the enjoyment of all their rights, and to be enabled to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.”<sup>7</sup> Five years later, on May 31, 1775, a month after the commencement of the Revolutionary War, Harvard College President Samuel Langdon delivered a sermon to the Massachusetts Congress titled “Government Corrupted by Vice, and Recovered by Righteousness.” Distinguished scholar, theologian, and charter member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and delegate to the New Hampshire convention that adopted the *U.S. Constitution*, he, too, understood the central role of government:

Thanks be to God that he has given us, as men, natural rights, independent of all human laws whatever.... By the *law of nature*, any body of people, destitute of order and government, may form themselves into a civil society, according to their best prudence, and so **provide for their common safety and advantage.**<sup>8</sup>

(from *Reason & Revelation*, September 2016)

(to be continued)

**LORD'S TABLE**

<b>PRESIDE:</b>	Dan Dawson	Cedric Huff
<b>ASSIST:</b>	Paul Davenport	Scott Ingram
	John Pope	David Richardson
	Jonah Wood	Jack Woods

**PRAYERS**

<b>A.M. OPENING:</b>	Warren Davenport
<b>A.M. CLOSING:</b>	Jim Woody
<b>P.M. OPENING:</b>	Keith McAlister
<b>P.M. CLOSING:</b>	John Manning

If you are unable to lead prayer or serve at the Lord's table, please contact Cedric Huff or Paul Connell.

**RECORD, WEEK of September 11, 2016**

BIBLE STUDY:	215
A.M. WORSHIP:	280
P.M. WORSHIP:	205
CONTRIBUTON:	\$14,221

**OUR SICK**

**Virginia Ditto**, Kirby Pines Rehab.

**Garland Elkins**, Christian Care Center, Room 220.

**Velton Trimm**, Christian Care Center, Room 212.

**Gerry Sims**, father of Cindy Dawson, Christian Care Center, room 310.

**ILL AT HOME:** J. D. & Brenda Crowe, Bertha Draughon, Shaunna Hanel and Avis Terry.

**HOMEBOUND**

Bessie Berry	Albert & Ruth House
Virginia Ditto	Clarine Justice
Hazel Eskew	Ryan McCullar
Tommy & Nell Herndon	Helen Palazola
Anita Hopper	Jerry & Betty Robbins

**REQUESTED PRAYERS:** Sean Ellis, Matthew Jones and Jerry Manning.

**OUR SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED** to Sabrena Sowell in the passing of her father, Larry Pontius, following a tragic accident.

**KIRBY PINES** Retirement Community worship service each fourth Sunday 8:00-8:45 a.m., conducted by Forest Hill. Our next service will be Sunday, September 25.

**LEGACY ESTATES** worship service each Sunday afternoon 3:00 p.m., conducted by Forest Hill.

**CHILDREN'S CLOTHES CLOSET** is in need of fall and winter clothing for boys sizes 18 months - size12 and fall and winter clothing for girls sizes 5-12. A thank you note from our recent recipients has been posted on the church bulletin board.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**LADIES' and MEN'S CLASSES** meet each Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

**MONEY MANAGEMENT** (9 Week Course) begins Tuesday, September 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the M.O.S.T classroom #405 of the education building. This class will be taught by Robert Berch. Please go to: <http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/locations/class/1023665> to sign up and order class materials.

**BABY SHOWER** honoring Alecia Ingram, Saturday, September 17 at 2:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. RSVP to Candy Johns (901)302-6256. Registered at Walmart

**JCs AND PARENTS** please meet Sunday, September 18 after the morning service in the MSOP breakroom. Pizza will be provided.

**ELDERS & DEACONS MEETING** Sunday, September 18 following the afternoon service in the chapel hall.

**LADIES EVENING BIBLE STUDY** Thursday, September 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the break room of the education building.

**HEARTS & HANDS REORGANIZATION LUNCHEON** Sunday, September 25 after the morning service. All are invited to stay for this covered dish luncheon in the fellowship hall. **ZONES 3 & 4** are responsible for set-up and clean-up. **ZONE 6** is responsible for supplying drinks and set-up, serve and clean-up the drink area.

**FLU SHOTS** Sunday, September 25, after the morning service in the fellowship hall. Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

**GAME NIGHT & COOK-OUT** for all ages, Saturday, October 1. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

**FALL FOOD DRIVE** for the Tennessee Children's Home. A list of needed items is on the bulletin board. Deadline is Sunday, October 9.

**GRIZZLIES BASKETBALL GAME** December 18. All are welcome to join us. Please sign up on the J.C's bulletin board. Tickets are \$20. See Danny or Melinda Braddock if you have questions.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Annabeth Essene, Colson Albrighton, and Ava Jones as they learned all their cards last quarter. Keegan Brown worked very hard, too!

**Last week's solution:**

*And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. Genesis 12:7*

**CORNERSTONE**

Replace each letter with a different letter to reveal the scripture.

VURP VGD HXKK TQUYKZXV GFGQB UDG OXR UHD  
WUUNDGRR ILP Z MZXPOMLK VZD HOU YZD MXDN?  
POG ELRP VZD HZKJGPO XD OXR XDPGWQXPB OXR  
YOXKNQGD ZQG IKGRRGN ZMPGQ OXV.

K = L

Solution next week

Y = C

## Phyllis Schlafly

1924-2016

Often in the Forest Hill News I honor those who have passed who were faithful members of Forest Hill or in some way highly influential in our vast brotherhood. Rarely, however, do I honor the passing of someone outside the Lord's body, but today I feel compelled to do so. Phyllis Schlafly was a constitutional lawyer and conservative activist who, perhaps more than any woman in her generation, fought valiantly in the public arena for the biblical values that made our nation strong and for the constitutional rights, such as religious liberty, which are embedded in our constitution. She helped stir the hearts of our citizens by drawing attention to the leftist agenda that was set out to destroy our fundamental beliefs, such as faith in God and a strong moral fabric. Through her leadership, the so called Equal Rights Amendment was defeated during the 1970's because she saw clearly that such was nothing more than a "Pandora's box" that would begin the destruction of the God ordained family that had long been respected in America.

I had the honor and privilege of meeting Mrs. Schlafly in the late 1980's when she debated another attorney, Sarah Weddington, who represented Jane Roe in the landmark decision Roe vs. Wade, which legalized abortion on demand. Schlafly capably defended the precious life inside the womb, completely destroying the arguments of Weddington. When I had the opportunity to shake her hand and speak with her for just a moment following the debate, she was one of the warmest and kindest notable individuals that I have ever met.

Phyllis Schlafly died last week at the age of 92. We need more Americans with her courage and conviction. She fought to the very end of her life for the values that have sustained our nation. No doubt she was saddened by the direction our country has taken during the sunset years of her life. But may she be remembered for what she was – an American patriot. She fought on the side of righteous principles which make nations great (Prov. 14:34). As New Testament Christians we cannot do anything less.

Barry

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