

BIC Civic Engagement Through the Years

- 1780 BIC Confession of Faith forbids “bearing the sword” or “swearing pledges”
- 1860-1865 Civil War: BIC Church in U.S. registers as a non-resistance church
- 1880 General Conference prohibits joining political organizations
- 1882 General Conference exempts school board elections from the category of “political elections”
- 1892 One *Visitor* contributor warns that political parties are “composed of all shades of society – unbelievers, swearers, and drunkards”
- 1894 General Conference cautions against holding public office to avoid involvement in political “strife”
- 1913 General Conference charges BIC to bear a clear testimony on moral issues of public interest (e.g., temperance and tobacco)
- 1917 A Kansan BIC church defies General Conference by appointing two trustees to the “Anti-Saloon League of Kansas”
- 1939-1945 World War II: BIC in U.S. divided on loyalty to nonresistant position
- 1949 BIC Church joins the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)
- 1953 Many BIC vote for Dwight D. Eisenhower
- 1959 General Conference affirms voting as “a matter of individual conscience”
- 1986 BIC *Articles of Faith and Doctrine* read, “Selective involvement in the affairs of government is appropriate for believers if loyalty to Christ and the principles of His kingdom are carefully guarded”
- 2006 86.8% say that church leaders should try to influence government leaders on issues like war and poverty (*Church Member Profile*, 2006)

When Kingdoms Collide: Christians and Politics (V)

Pastor Alan Robinson, October 5, 2008

1 Peter 2:11-17

(11) Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. (12) Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

(13) Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, (14) or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. (15) For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. (16) Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. (17) Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Extract of Thomas Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptists January 1, 1802

Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church and State.