

Politics and the Bible

- The Bible and Earthly Rulers
 - Psalm 2:2–3
 - Ephesians 6:12
- The Christian duty to vote
 - Numbers 27:12–23
 - Judges 21:25
- God’s standards for governors and governments
 - Psalm 72
 - Deuteronomy 17:14–20
 - 1 Samuel 8:4–18
- What God cares most about in a leader
 - 2 Chronicles 24:1–18
- What policies are most important
 - Acts 4:15–20
 - Rom 13:3–4

John Rankin (1793–1886) — abolitionist

“Thus have I been attacked at midnight with fire and weapons of death, and nothing but the good providence of God has preserved my property from flames and myself and family from violence and death. And why? Have I wronged any one? No, but I am an ABOLITIONIST. I do not recognize the slaveholder's right to the flesh and blood and souls of men and women. For this I must be proscribed, my property burnt, and my life put in jeopardy! Now I desire all men to know that I am not to be deterred from what I believe to be my duty by fire and sword. I also wish all to know that I feel it my duty to defend my HOME to the very uttermost, and that it is as much a duty to shoot the midnight assassin in his attacks as it is to pray.”¹

C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892)

“German rationalism which has ripened into Socialism may yet pollute the mass of mankind and lead them to overturn the foundations of society. Then “advanced principles” will hold carnival, and free thought [read: atheism] will riot with the vice and blood which were years ago the insignia of “the age of reason.” I say not that it will be so, but I should not wonder if it came to pass, for deadly principles are abroad and certain ministers are spreading them. If it ever should be so, do not, O believers, for a single moment despair, but rest certain that the Lord is about to do a marvellous thing in the earth, and that he will lift up once again the stone which the builders have again refused, and cause it to become more than ever the headstone of the corner. Never dream of defeat. Be calm amid all the din of controversy, for the hand which holds the gospel must win the victory. This is the Lord’s doing and we shall see it.”²

“Something worse than war is threatening. Anarchy seeks to make havoc in the streets. There are plenty of signs and tokens that a breakup of social order is desired by not a few. Fierce spirits are eager to repeat among us the horrors of the French Revolution. *To break down, divide, destroy, disintegrate, is the policy of many.* The earthquake of society is more to be dreaded than the quaking of the globe, and we are within measurable distance of such a catastrophe.”³

¹ Rankin, John. “The Midnight Assassin.” The Rankin House. Accessed September 30, 2020.

² C. H. Spurgeon, “The Head Stone of the Corner,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons* (1878), 24357.

³ C. H. Spurgeon, “Earthquake, but Not Heartquake,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons* (1887), 33130.

G.K. Chesterton (1874 – 1936)

“A despotism may almost be defined as a tired democracy. As fatigue falls on a community, the citizens are less inclined for that eternal vigilance which has truly been called the price of liberty; and they prefer to arm only one single sentinel to watch the city while they sleep.”⁴

“Liberty is traditional and conservative; it remembers its legends and its heroes. But tyranny is always young and seemingly innocent, and asks us to forget the past.”⁵

“What’s worthwhile to point out, first and last, is that Socialism is a tyranny; that it is inevitably, even avowedly and almost justifiably, a tyranny. It’s the pretense that government can prevent all injustice by being directly responsible for practically anything that happens.”⁶

“Those of us who study the papers and the parliamentary speeches with proper attention must have by this time a fairly precise idea of the nature of the evil of Socialism. It is a remote Utopian dream impossible of fulfilment and also an overwhelming practical danger that threatens us at every moment.”⁷

C.S. Lewis (1898–1963)

“I am a democrat because I believe in the Fall of Man. I think most people are democrats for the opposite reason. A great deal of democratic enthusiasm descends from the ideas of people like Rousseau, who believed in democracy because they thought mankind so wise and good that everyone deserved a share in the government. The danger of defending democracy on those grounds is that they’re not true. And whenever their weakness is exposed, the people who prefer tyranny make capital out of the exposure. I find that they’re not true without looking further than myself. I don’t deserve a share in governing a hen-roost, much less a nation. Nor do most people: all the people who believe advertisements, and think in catchwords and spread rumours. The real reason for democracy is just the reverse. Mankind is so fallen that no man can be trusted with unchecked power over his fellows. Aristotle said that some people were only fit to be slaves. I do not contradict him. But I reject slavery because I see no men fit to be masters.”
*Present Concerns*⁸

“I believe in political equality. But there are two opposite reasons for being a democrat. You may think all men so good that they deserve a share in the government of the commonwealth, and so wise that the commonwealth needs their advice. That is, in my opinion, the false, romantic doctrine of democracy. On the other hand, you may believe fallen men to be so wicked that not one of them can be trusted with any irresponsible power over his fellows. That I believe to be the true ground of democracy. I do not believe that God created an egalitarian world. I believe the authority of parent over child, husband over wife, learned over simple to have been as much a part of the original plan as the authority of man over beast... But since we have learned sin, we have found, as Lord Acton says, that “all power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” The only remedy has been to take away the powers and substitute a legal fiction of equality... Theocracy has been rightly abolished not because it is bad that learned priests should govern ignorant laymen, but because priests are wicked men like the rest of us.”⁹

⁴ G. K. Chesterton, *Everlasting Man*, part 1, ch. 3.

⁵ Chesterton, *The Illustrated London News*, 30 December 1911.

⁶ Chesterton, *The Illustrated London News*, October 10, 1925.

⁷ Chesterton, *The Outline of Sanity*, part 1, chapter 4 (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1927).

⁸ C. S. Lewis, *Words to Live by: A Guide for the Merely Christian* (HarperCollins e-books, 2009), 109.

⁹ C. S. Lewis, “Membership,” *The Weight of Glory: And Other Addresses* (New York: HarperOne, 2001), 168–169.