

BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CIVIL SERVANTS (CS)

NOTE: *This is a set of notes used to elicit discussion during a workshop for civil servants in Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria, 1996.*

1. CS ARE ALWAYS PEOPLE.

Everything that is incumbent on people in general holds also for CS. They need to eat and drink. They need to sleep. Most of them marry and have children. They make love. They get tired. They get old. Sometimes they get sick. They need shelter. They have brothers and sisters. Parents and children. They even defecate just like all other people. They breathe. They laugh; they cry. Eventually they die and, hopefully, go to heaven. The needs of CS, their desires and wants, their problems and victories--just like everyone else. They are expected to be kind, not cruel; help people develop, not obstruct them. They are expected to feel sorry for people in trouble and feel pity for those in pain. All the laws of life apply to them, the same laws that apply to all other people, including the people they serve. Everything that is human is theirs.

When you join the Service, you do not suddenly become something else--indifferent to problems and suffering. You are not expected suddenly to lose all your feelings for others and sensitivities. You do not suddenly take off your humanity like you take off your hat. You are human and remain that. You cannot take it off and become some other kind of creature governed by different laws and subject to other expectations.

2. CHRISTIAN CS ARE ALWAYS CHRISTIANS

The above is also from the Christian perspective. All the things that God requires of Christians are also required of CS. Nowhere in the Bible is there the slightest hint that the laws of God are applicable inside government offices any less than they are in church or any other place. The laws of God hold everywhere, at all times, in all places and under all circumstances--no exception. There is no place where Jesus is not Lord. And there is no place, job,

position or condition in which a Christian ceases to be Christian.

3. GENERAL BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN RELATIONS

The most explicit teachings in the Bible about CS are not rules that deal specifically with CSs. It is the Biblical rules concerning general human behaviour that ought to guide every human being, incl CSs, in all circumstances they find themselves in. Some of the most common or famous are:

Cultural Mandate [CM] (Gen. 1:26-28)

The CM talks about ruling over the earth. The CS is the hands, eyes, nose, ear, feet of the ruler in power. It is an instrument for ruling. That is the first command given to mankind. That is what God wanted us to do: to rule this world, to make something of it. See my book *THE PROPHET MOSES¹ FOR TODAY*, 5, 6, 7, 11

Decalogue [10 commandments] (Exod. 20; Deut. 5)

Great Commandment (Mat 22:37-40) MOSES 218

Romans 13:8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. Galatians 5:14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Golden Rule (Mat. 7:12; Luke 6:31) MOSES 217

OTHER RELEVANT PASSAGES/TEACHINGS

Image of God in man (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 7:1) MOSES 8, 9, 10, 11, 51, 78, 116

God's People a Blessing (Gen. 12:2-3) MOSES 59

Ethnocentrism or Tribalism MOSES 56, 58

¹References to "MOSES" in this document refer to Boer's *The Prophet Moses for Today: 366 Social Meditations*. The numbers behind the references refer to the number of the meditation. The book itself is found on this website page under the section "Bible and Theology."

Corruption is the product of unbelief and always
begets corruption, disunity and chaos (Gen.
20:1ff)
MOSES, 62, 67

Nothing is impossible with God (Gen. 17:7) MOSES, 68

God often uses difficult situations for good (Gen.
50:20; Rom. 8:28-39) MOSES,
69

God expects Christians to obey the government (Rom.
13:1-7),
but note the definition and basic function of
government. Then also note the following: Ex.
1:17; I Sam 16:1ff. Note the story of Daniel who
refused to obey the wrong commands of the king.
Note how Paul and the other disciples refused to
quit preaching when ordered to do so by the
authorities (Acts. 5:20).

MOSES, 70-71, 108 God could be calling you to rescue
your
people instead of cheating them as so many CS do.
Listen to Him. You just could be surprised (Ex.
3:10) MOSES, 72

God will not accept excuses that disempower us and
that keep us from serving Him or rescuing His
people (Ex. 4:10) MOSES, 73

God can be slower to rescue than we want Him to be. We
may then wrongly conclude that our efforts are
all in vain (Ex. 5:23) MOSES, 76

God expects us to open our eyes to His reality and
power (Ex. 6:1). He can use you to do a miracle
of liberation that you never expected (Ex. 7:9).
He will fight for you (Ex. 14:14, 21) MOSES,
77, 80, 84, 86.

When God's people stand up for the right, His and
their enemies will run out of fear (Ex. 14:25)
MOSES, 85

Remember how God has rescued His people in the past as

a guarantee He will do so in the future.
Forgetfulness can be fatal for our faith and
action (Ex. 15:13, 22, 24) MOSES, 87, 88

The God of healing (Ex. 15:26) MOSES 89
Grumbling weakens and disempowers (Ex. 16:2)
MOSES 90

God's law is for everyone (Deut. 17:19) MOSES 99

No other gods (Ex. 20:3) MOSES 103

Example of other gods (Ex. 20:3) MOSES 105

Tribalism--another god (Ex. 20:3) MOSES 107

God in everything (Ex. 20:3) MOSES 109

God all in all (Ex. 20:3) MOSES 111

Ideology as idol (Deut. 5:8) MOSES 113
Religion for the support of the powerful (Ex.
20:4)
MOSES 114

Stealing (Ex. 20:15) MOSES 206, 208, 209, 213, 215, 216
223, 224, 225, 226, 227

Defending your neighbour, incl. your enemy (Ex. 23:4-5)
MOSES 219, 220

Love of money (I Tim 6:10) MOSES 222

More blessed to give than.... (Acts 20:35) MOSES 221

The way to prosperity (Deut. 15:4-5) MOSES 366

LIVING IN GOD'S WORLD²--

PAGES 51-52 BRIBERY

Also: Acts 24:26-27 At the same time he was
hoping that Paul would offer him a [bribe](#), so he

²*Living in God's World* is a compilation of Bible passages on all these topics. It is listed on this page under "Bible and Theology," but it is not reproduced due to copyright issues in the Western world, something we did not worry about too much in Nigeria.

sent for him frequently and talked with him. When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

PAGES 53FF GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS JUSTICE AND
OPPRESSION

PAGES 66FF GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE RELIGION OF
OPPRESSORS

PAGES 70FF GIFTS OF CHRISTIANS IN COMMUNITY

PAGES 73FF BUILDING UP EACH OTHER

PAGES 74FF OUR HOPE FOR NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

OTHER NT PASSAGES OR CONCEPTS

MAT 4:1-11 and LK 4:1-13 TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS

MAT 5:1-16 BEATITUDES

MAT 6:19-21 TREASURE IN HEAVEN OR EARTH

MAT 6:24 SERVING TWO MASTERS

MAT 6:25-34 DO NOT WORRY: SEEK KINGDOM FIRST

MAT 7:15-20 GOOD FRUIT OR....

MAT 7:24-29