

FAITH SEEKING FREEDOM

LIBERTARIAN CHRISTIAN
ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS

STUDY GUIDE

DR. NORMAN HORN • GARY HORN

LIBERTARIAN CHRISTIAN
INSTITUTE

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BEFORE YOU START...

This study guide is intended either for individual readers who want to interact more with the text or small groups that want a starting point for their regular discussions about their readings.

For a small group, you'll want to keep in mind that each person is going to come at the reading with a different point of view, and sometimes taking in information like this can be very challenging. Always remind your participants to be gracious and kind to one another, being quick to listen, slow to speak, seeking to understand first rather than be understood. Play with the ideas and learn together, rather than try to answer everything definitively the first time around. Enjoy the thinking and discussion process.

In addition, you may find through the readings that you have additional questions that we did not address in the book. We encourage you not to let those go, and instead let us know what's on your mind via our online feedback form here:

<https://libertarianchristians.com/faith-seeking-freedom/feedback>.

Finally, we included further reading at the end of every chapter, and we encourage you to seek out more from those lists for any subject that sparks your curiosity. You can find the full list including links to free articles (and sometimes free books!) here: <https://libertarianchristians.com/faith-seeking-freedom/further-reading>.

Enjoy the journey!

CHAPTER 1

WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT POLITICS?

If you could summarize your general view of politics in 1-2 sentences before reading this chapter, what would you have said? Did anything in this chapter surprise you about what God has to say about this topic?

Read Jeremiah 29:1-7. Do you think God calls Christians today to seek the 'shalom' (peace, prosperity, safety, well-being) of the people among whom they live? What does this look like, in terms of community service, voting, evangelism, business dealings, or other community interactions?

Read John 18:36. In what ways is Jesus' kingdom not of this world? Is it significant that Jesus mentions that his servants do not fight?

Read 1 Samuel 8:1-22 and 12:12-17. What does God's description of an earthly king tell us about his view of civil governments? Why would God call what they have done an evil thing? What manner of relationship with the government will be in their best interest going forward? (Note: 1 Samuel 10:17-19 omitted, didn't add that much)

Read Isaiah 8:1-7, Isaiah 10:12-13, and 1 Peter 2:13-14. How does God use governments to his ends?

Read Matthew 4:8-10, Ephesians 6:12 and Revelation 2:10. How does Satan (the devil) use governments to his ends?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 2

THE LIBERTARIAN BASICS

What philosophy would you say informs your views on politics the most? Does it come from passed-on views from your parents, peers, and the media, or have you developed your views in some other way?

Read Matthew 5:43-48, Mark 9:50, Luke 6:31, Romans 12:18, Galatians 5:14 and 1 Peter 2:17. How does the libertarian non-aggression principle compare with Jesus' teachings on how we should treat others?

Read Deuteronomy 8:10-18, Matthew 20:13-15, Acts 5:3-4, and 1 Timothy 6:17-19. What kinds of things has the Lord given us that are now ours to use as we choose? What is our role in accumulating possession? How does God want us to choose to use our wealth or possessions?

Read Proverbs 10:4, 12:11, 14:23, 24:30-34. What should be the rewards of the virtue of industry? What happens if you take away the incentives for hard work?

Read Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-37, and 5:1-11. How do these passages affirm the principle of property rights? How would you characterize the communal aspect of the early Christian community?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 3

WHAT IS GOVERNMENT?

Define government or “the state” – why is it important to be clear about what exactly is meant by this terminology?

Read Romans 3:8. Do ends that are good justify means that are wrong? How might this be applied to governments? How might it apply to war, taxation, or abortion?

Read Daniel 3:13-18, Acts 5:27-32, and Romans 13:1-7. Is Romans 13:1 a command to always obey the government? If not, then what is the over-arching concern or principle in Romans 13?

Read Deuteronomy 16:18-20, Proverbs 16:11, 20:23, Jeremiah 22:13, and Hebrews 12:14. How do these passages relate to the principle that “Governance, in essence, is about restraining injustice?”

What stands out most to you in this chapter? Did anything take you by surprise, or even offend you? If you had a strong reaction, take a step back and ask why.

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 4

DOES A FREE SOCIETY HAVE LIMITS?

Consider the ways in which we communicate with and lead other people. What means do you see people using to change peoples' behaviors? What do you see working, and what do you see not working?

Read Leviticus 24:19-21. For violent aggressors – sinful behavior that violates the rights of others – what were the overarching principles of justice?

Read Colossians 2:20-23. When it comes to vices – sinful behavior that does not violate the rights of others – in what sense do laws lack any value in restraining sinful indulgence? How does this relate to the idea of “legislating morality”?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-24. How do Christians view what is legal versus what is beneficial or pleasing to God? Contrast injustice with unrighteousness.

Read John 15:18-19, Philippians 2:14-16 and Luke 6:27-36. Should Christians expect the world around them to conform to God's standard of righteousness? What should be our perspective or expectation with regard to the culture we live in?

Read Ecclesiastes 5:8-9. What does wisdom tell us about the inherent nature of government?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 5

IS CAPITALISM PROBLEMATIC?

It's really easy to have a negative view of wealthy people in our present society. Why do you think this happens?

Read 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17-19 and Luke 18:18-27. Does God condemn the accumulation of wealth? How are we to regard wealth? What does God require of those who are wealthy?

Read Proverbs 31:10-31. In what ways is the "wife of noble character" a capitalist entrepreneur? Could she be unjustly accused of being materialistic? Did she have to exploit the poor to become wealthy? Why do you think she became successful?

Read Deuteronomy 15:11, Psalm 82:1-4, Proverbs 11:24-25, 20:13, 21:17, 23:20-21, and Matthew 26:6-13. What are some possible reasons for poverty? Why can poverty not be done away with simply by redistribution of wealth?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 6

WHAT ABOUT CHRISTIAN MORALS AND ETHICS?

We often see Christian leaders calling for treating unrighteous behaviors as criminal. Is this because we want immediate justice for those who break God's laws? Read Romans 2:1-8 and 2 Peter 3:8-9. What concerns other than lawbreakers getting what they deserve does God have?

Read Zechariah 7:9-10 and Colossians 3:12. Does true justice require criminalization of vices such as prostitution or drug use, or does true mercy and compassion require seeking ways to actually help people overcome their problems?

Read Romans 1:18 - 2:11. In this passage, Paul calls out a number of vices and unrighteous lifestyles: idol worship, sexual immorality, homosexuality, greed, envy, atheism, and so on. How would you describe God's response to these kinds of lifestyles that we might view as examples of depravity? How does this inform our attitude towards people involved in these lifestyles?

Read Leviticus 19:15, Deuteronomy 24:14-15, Proverbs 22:22-23, 28:3, 29:14, Isaiah 3:14-15 and 10:1-2. Does this repeated concern that those in power will exploit the poor and deny them justice give credence to the statement that government regulatory agencies actually favor and protect the elite few rather than keeping greed in check?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 7

WHAT ABOUT PUBLIC GOODS AND SERVICES?

Before reading this chapter, what public services would you probably have said were indispensable and had to be provided by the government?

For many services you are probably aware of examples where they are operated by the government as well as where they are operated by private organizations in other places: toll roads, schools, hospitals, security services, and recreation areas, to name a few. Where you have had experiences with both government as well as privately operated services, how would you compare your experiences?

Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Exodus 35:30-35, 1 Chronicles 25:6-8, and Acts 22:2-3. What are some of the ways education has always been accomplished without a state-controlled education system? How has the church historically helped with this concern?

Consider the pros and cons of state-run services. Find a partner, then take a minute to pick one of the services mentioned in the chapter (or another that you thought of yourself) and make a list of the pros and cons for how government operates it. Then, see if you can envision a creative way around the problem without using the government.

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 8

WHAT ABOUT NATIONALISM, NATION STATE, PATRIOTISM?

What is the popular view of war around us? Why do you think there is such a predilection for violence among our brethren both in the church and outside?

Read Matthew 5:43-48. While we can admit that this does not preclude self-defense, how do you think these verses should affect the way we think about war – a mass conflict instigated by governments?

Read Matthew 6:24 and 2 Timothy 2:3. How might the duty of a soldier to his commanding officer conflict with other possible loyalties such as to God?

Read Acts 16:17-40, 21:39-40, 22:23-29, Ephesians 2:19-20, and Philippians 3:20-21. How does Paul use his earthly citizenship to the advantage of himself and his mission? How does Paul think of his citizenship?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 9

WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Read Exodus 23:10-11 and Leviticus 19:9-10. Were God's instructions on caring for the poor calling for private charity or government welfare? How did it differ from government welfare?

Read Exodus 23:6, Leviticus 25:35-43 and Amos 5:10-15. How do these passages indicate that social justice toward the poor must consist of more than a welfare check? Are there ways libertarian principles and free markets work to the advantage of the poor?

Read 2 Chronicles 19:4-7, Acts 10:27-35, Romans 2:9-11, and James 2:1. Does God ever show favoritism to one race over another? Do you think racism is still a problem in the church today?

Consider the preoccupation our modern world has for “social justice” in general. But how does God’s view of justice as proclaimed in the Bible conflict with what the world says is just?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 10

WHAT ABOUT IMMIGRATION?

Have you ever encountered someone in your community that you didn't share a language with and have trouble communicating at first? What did you do? Was it frustrating, or did you find the interaction enlightening somehow?

Read Leviticus 19:33-34, 24:17-22, Deuteronomy 10:14-22, Ezekiel 22:29 and Jeremiah 22:3-5. How were the Israelites called to treat the aliens/immigrants among them?

Read Genesis 11:1-11, Acts 2:1-12, 1 Peter 2:9-12 and Revelation 5:9-10. In the Genesis account of the tower of Babel, in what ways was man rebelling against God? In the account of the beginning of the church in Acts 2, in ways was God reversing the effects of this rebellion? In what ways should the church transcend national boundaries?

Read Isaiah 56:1-7, Matthew 28:18-20 and 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. Do you think God is overly concerned about “effectively integrating” people into a particular culture? What concerns might supersede this one?

What did you learn about the economic aspects of immigration in this chapter that you didn't know before? Did it change your mind on any issues, or deepen your understanding of the complexity of policy?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 11

WHAT ABOUT ABORTION?

When you think about abortion and the political spectrum, what comes to mind? What experiences have you had with pro-life and pro-choice people that were most memorable? What emotions are entangled within those experiences? (Be sensitive to others if sharing in a group!)

Read Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:4 and 20:17-18. Does Scripture make the case that abortion is morally wrong? Does it make the case that it should be illegal in the same way as murder?

Read Micah 6:8, Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 2:16, Ephesians 5:1-16 and Romans 12:17-21. In what ways will our Christian perspective on abortion and those involved be the same regardless of whether it is legal or illegal?

The politics of abortion are especially complicated. What did you learn from this chapter that you can take into your next discussion with someone about abortion?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 12

WHAT ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND CREATION?

Read Genesis 1:26-30, 9:1-3 and Psalm 8:3-8. What is man's relationship to the rest of God's creation here on earth?

Read Psalm 65:5-13 and Psalm 104:10-32. How would you describe God's ongoing relationship with his creation? How does this inform how we should view our environment?

Does the image of the garden in Genesis and man cultivating it for use, take on new meaning in light of an understanding of economic life in part being a means by which we serve others and better ourselves as well?

How does the image of the garden contrast against the view that keeping things in a "state of nature" is the most important thing about protecting the environment?

Read Matthew 25:14-30. If we think of the earth as property/possessions entrusted to us, how does the parable of the talents inform our view of the environment? Why would property owners seeking their own best interest have a positive impact on our environment?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

CHAPTER 13

CHRISTIANS MISCONCEPTIONS OF LIBERTARIANISM

These days, the political spectrum is often treated like a dividing line in church, but often we don't understand each other particularly well. Can you think of a time when you thought you understood the position of someone different from you politically but found out you didn't nearly understand well enough?

Read Leviticus 19:18 and 19:34. The command to love your neighbor as yourself is reiterated in no less than 6 books in the New Testament. What are the implications of the phrase 'as yourself' in this command? Is it necessary to have some degree of self-interest if we are to truly follow this command?

What is your most important takeaway from this chapter?

You've finished the book! Summarize your thoughts overall about what you've learned. Did you learn something new? What was most memorable? Did you look up any of the Further Reading resources at the end of a chapter? What sparks your interest to learn more? What bothered you? Take some time to ponder what God wants you to change in your own views about how we think about politics and government. *How are you going to commit to keep "renewing your mind" in the future, whether it relates to this book or some other area of your life that you realized?*

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Foreword:

Doubting Thomas, driving moneychangers from the temple, Jesus feeding the 5000, the good Samaritan

Introduction:

Matthew 20:25-27 greatest among you
Ephesians 6:12 spiritual warfare
2 Corinthians 10:4-5 take every thought captive
1 Peter 3:15 ready to defend the gospel
Revelation 7:10 salvation belongs to God

Chapter 1: Why Should I Care About Politics?

- 2 John 18:36 not of this world
- 4 Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-14, Titus 3:1 necessity of civil governance
- 5 Romans 13:1
- 6 Genesis 11 tower of Babel
- 7 1 Samuel 8:11-18 Israel wants a king
- 8 Matthew 20:25 domination versus serving
Matthew 4:8-10 temptation
Ephesians 6:12
- 9 Revelation 14:8

Chapter 2: The Libertarian Basics

- 11 2 Timothy 2:22 pursue peace and righteousness
- 12 Romans 12:18, Mark 9:50 live at peace with all
Luke 6:31 golden rule
Galatians 5:14 love your neighbor

Genesis 4:10-11 murder

Exodus 21:16 kidnaping

Exodus 21:18 assault

Matthew 19:18 theft

Proverbs 20:23 fraud

Exodus 22:1-9 property rights

1 Peter 2:17 respect, honor

Romans 2:11-12 no favoritism

14 Colossians 1:15-17 all it ultimately God's

Matthew 20:15 property rights

15 Genesis 1:28, 9:1, 9:7, 35:11, Jeremiah 23:3 be fruitful and multiply

Deuteronomy 8:10-18 property rights

16 1 Corinthians 6:19 we were bought with a price

Psalm 24:1, Deuteronomy 10:14, Job 41:11 everything is God's

Genesis 2:15 entrusted to man's stewardship

Genesis 3:19 man must labor

Proverbs 6:6-11, 13:22 industry a virtue

18 Acts 2:42-47, 4:32 all things in common

Acts 5 Ananias & Sapphira

20 John 1:1 Jesus the origin

Romans 12:18 live peaceably

Matthew 5:43-48 love your enemies

Acts 5

Chapter 3: What Is Government?

- 21 James 2, Romans 2:11 no favoritism
Romans 3:8 ends do not justify means
Joshua 24:15 men can choose
Romans 13 how to act with govt, not a justification for govt
- 23 Matthew 5:9 blessed are peacemakers
- 24 Exodus 20:13 do not murder
Romans 2:15 God's law on hearts
Romans 1:18 those who suppress the truth
- 26 Proverbs 16:11, 20:23, Micah 6:11 honest weights/measures
Jeremiah 22:13-15, James 5:4 unjust gain
Amos 2:6 injustice condemned
Romans 12:19 God will avenge
Romans 13:4 God uses government to punish
Judges 2:20-23 God uses pagan governments to punish
- 27 John 14:27 God's peace
Hebrews 12:14, 2 Corinthians 13:11 live in peace
Matthew 5:9 blessed are peacemakers
Titus 1:7-8 character trait of leaders
- 28 Luke 16:17 God's law unchanging
Acts 10:34 God shows no favoritism
James 2:1-4, 8-9 no favoritism

Chapter 4: Does a Free Society Have Limits?

- 30 Psalm 126:5-6 sowing/reaping
Proverbs 10:4, 13:4, 20:4 industry vs idleness
1 Timothy 5:8 idleness
Colossians 2:16-18 uselessness of rules
Leviticus 24:19-21 eye for eye
- 31 1 Corinthians 6:12, 10:23-29 legal vs beneficial
2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 God's word our guide

- 32 Prov 3:5-6 trust in God, not men
- 33 John 15:18-19 world will hate Christians
Romans 12:18 live in peace
Philippians 2:5-16 living in a perverse world
Matthew 5:38-42, Luke 6:27-36 going beyond what is demanded
Matthew 5:43-48, Luke 6:32-36 loving enemies
- 34 Deuteronomy 16:18-20 injustice condemned
Ecclesiastes 5:8-9 injustice inherent in government

Chapter 5: Is Capitalism Problematic?

- 35 1 Timothy 6:10 love of money root of evil

Chapter 6: What about Christian Morals and Ethics?

- 42 Romans 13:4 rulers bring punishment on wrongdoers
- 43 Zechariah 7:9-10 justice, mercy, compassion
2 Corinthians 1:3-4 comfort
Galatians 6:2 carry one another's burdens
Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:12 kind, compassionate
- 48 Exodus 20:13 murder (suicide)
- 50 Matthew 26:11 poor will always exist

Chapter 7: What about Public Goods and Services?

- no references

Chapter 8: What about Nationalism, Nation State, Patriotism?

- 63 1 Thessalonians 5:18 thankfulness
- 65 John 15:13 no greater love

Chapter 9: What about Social Justice?

- 69 Acts 2:44 sharing all things in common

Chapter 10: What about Immigration?

- 71 Adam/Eve, Joseph, Israel, Ruth, Jesus
refugees/immigrants
Matthew 25:34-46 strangers
Exodus 12:49, Leviticus 24:22 equal rights
Leviticus 19:33-34 equal treatment/love
Deuteronomy 10:14-22 love/care for aliens
Job 31:32 door open to travelers
Deuteronomy 24:19-24 care for aliens
Malachi 3:5, Deuteronomy 27:19 judgement
against oppressors
Ezekiel 22:7, 29-31, Jeremiah 22:3-5 equal
justice
Jeremiah 7:6-7 condition for blessings
- 72 Genesis 10 nations
Genesis 11:1-9 the tower, languages
Numbers 16:23-35 rebellion against Moses
Isaiah 56:1-8 aliens who bind themselves to
the Lord
Matthew 28:16-20 great commission
Acts 10:28,35 Peter/Cornelius
1 Peter 2:9-10 the people of God

Chapter 11: What about Abortion?

- 83 Micah 6:8 do justice, love mercy
Galatians 5:13, 1 Peter 2:16
Ephesians 5:2,8
Romans 12:19

Chapter 12: What about the Environment and Creation?

- 89 Genesis 1:28 subdue the earth
90 Romans 8:18-21 earth decaying
Genesis 3:21 animal skins
Genesis 3:17-19,23 earth fallen
Psalm 65:8
Genesis 2:14 the Lord provides
Matthew 25:14-30 parable of the talents
Proverbs 13:22 leaving an inheritance