

CBCGB Official Stance on Political Issues

This document explains CBCGB's approach towards involvement in contemporary issues. We all deeply care about the events around us and trust that God does as well. The Bible gives direction and distinction for at least some classes of issues -- those that may be objectionable but have no clear moral component, those that may cause or mandate Christians to sin, and those that oppress people who cannot defend themselves.

Below, we will outline what we determined to be an appropriate response by the CBCGB for those situations. To start with a broad comment though, we know that some contemporary issues are complex or are difficult to know how to react to, so we encourage you to come to CBCGB leadership with questions, pray, wrestle with how the Spirit is leading you, and respectfully discourse with others even if their views differ from your own convictions.

I. Default Stance

Summary

The Bible exhorts believers to “obey the ruling authorities”. This is CBCGB’s default stance towards issues, particularly ones that have no clear Biblical mandate.

Scripture

Several passages support this stance; the following are a few relevant verses and excerpts. We encourage you to consider the surrounding context of these verses:

["Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God" \[Rom13:1\]](#)

["Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" \[Mark 12:17\]](#)

["Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority" \[1Pet 2:13\]](#)

We believe these verses are still applicable today and not overly contextual or specific to early Christians’ situation. For example, Paul was actively being oppressed by the ruling Roman authorities, and soon to be martyred for his faith, when he wrote Romans 13, so his situation was not lighter than our own.

Policy

Our default stance where the Bible does not clearly speak for/against issues, is to obey our ruling authorities whether on a federal, state, or local level as applicable. This applies to even controversial issues that we may personally disagree with, and means we will not advocate political stances from the pulpit on said issues, will not allow for petitioning or postering on church grounds or through church venues, and will not comment on said issues on our website or other social media.

We do acknowledge that for such issues, individual members may have different convictions, and we encourage members to share their personal opinions, as long as this is done in a respectful way and is not done through official church settings such as on the pulpit, offering, official CBCGB mailing lists, etc. Outside of CBCGB, we do encourage individuals or groups to exercise their democratic rights to campaign, protest, gather in assembly, or any other legal means as they feel led. Additionally, our leaders have the freedom to express their own personal stances whether on social media, in small groups, etc., so long as they are in venues where there is no risk they will be seen as speaking on behalf of CBCGB.

That said, while the Bible may not directly address many of today's issues, Scripture is almost always still relevant. Thus, when notable hot topics arise, pastoral staff will endeavor to provide relevant Scriptural passages or teachings. We will remain as neutral as possible and try to give a balanced view, through explaining what Scripture teaches us that is relevant to the different stances. Hopefully our sharing can help you in formulating your own opinions.

Examples

- Immigration laws
- Transgender use of bathrooms
- Marriage laws around gay marriage, divorce, remarriage
- Drinking and recreational drug laws

II. Stance for Issues with Biblical Basis

Summary

If an issue violates core Biblical teachings and/or compels Christians to sin, then CBCGB will likely take a clear stance against the issue.

Scripture

Scripture gives us some examples of leaders who explicitly disobeyed their ruling authorities, in order to avoid sinning. We quote the most relevant excerpts of these narratives, but encourage readers to look at the surrounding context:

“The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live.” [Exo 1:17]

“Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” [Daniel 6:13]

“Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” [Acts 4:18-20]

Policy

If a world issue clearly violates a core Biblical teaching, then CBCGB may take a definitive stance such as preaching on the topic, drafting a letter that formally clarifies our stance to the congregation, and advertising a stance on official church media. This process will be initiated by BoE, with church council and pastoral staff aligning on the stance, possibly after some discourse. Once the stance is published, we would expect members to align with the stance; there may not be unanimous agreement and we cannot force members to all share the same perspective, but members should not promote or teach a contrary view in official settings or when they representing CBCGB.

Depending on the nature and severity of the issue, CBCGB may or may not advocate for any specific political action; for example, there is a difference in severity between a law that allows for sinful behavior, versus one that forces it upon its citizens. Thus, if an issue may cause imminent harm to our congregation or force our congregation to sin, we may officially and actively oppose the issue.

Regardless, congregants and leaders -- including pastoral staff -- are permitted to take political action on their own, as long as they are not representing the church. Any activities they do on behalf of the church must be approved by BoE, to ensure that those activities are aligned with Biblical principles (e.g. do not promote violence or sin).

Examples

- Forcing doctors to perform abortions.
- Laws in other countries restricting religious freedoms.
- Laws or political movements that encourage worship of a leader (e.g. during Nazi Germany).

III. Stance on Behalf of the Oppressed

Summary

Christians are exhorted to defend those who are helpless. Thus, in situations where other people groups are subject to oppression and are powerless to defend themselves, CBCGB may take a stance and encourage behavior.

Scripture

Scripture has many passages and examples about the core principle of defending the defenseless:

“They do not promote the case of the fatherless; they do not defend the just cause of the poor. Should I not punish them for this?” declares the Lord.” [Jer 5:26-29]

“Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” [Ps 82:3-4]

Policy

If there are people or people groups whom CBCGB morally and Biblically needs to defend, and cannot do so without political action, CBCGB may take a political stance. This process will be initiated by BoE, with church council and pastoral staff aligning on the stance, possibly after some discourse. Once the stance is published, we would expect members to align with the stance; there may not be unanimous agreement and we cannot force members to all share the same perspective, but members should not promote or teach a contrary view in official settings or when they representing CBCGB.

Note that the applicability of this section is narrower than the general mandate to do good and show compassion. Notably, this does not cover cases where we morally disagree with a certain law, course, or action; for example, we would not advocate for laws to prevent gay couples from adopting children since this presents no immediate harm to the children.

Examples

- Abortion (since unborn babies cannot protect or advocate for themselves).
- Freeing imprisoned missionaries in other countries.

Appendix I: Examples

Here are a few examples of how we might handle real or theoretical issues:

Issue classification	Example Issues	Church stance	Church leader and members stance	Stance towards non-members and visitors
<p>Issues that do not have a clear Biblical teaching, though may be related to Biblical topics</p>	<p>Transgender bathrooms, immigration restrictions, gun rights, political party affiliation</p>	<p>These are secular, versus sacred, issues, so we will not preach for/against these issues in any church venues including sermons, small groups, retreats, etc. We will not take an official stance for/against the issue.</p> <p>Pastoral staff may share letters to help congregants come up with their own convictions. These letters will include Scripture and try to take a balanced but Biblical approach.</p> <p>By default, we will submit to the ruling authorities in following the laws that apply to the issue, whether on a federal, state, local level as applicable.</p>	<p>Leaders and members are not expected to hold a particular stance and are welcome to share their own convictions as long as this sharing is done as part of a personal opinion versus through official church venues or preaching. For example, members are permitted to post opinions on social media, talk about the issue in small group, etc. Members are not permitted to speak on the topic while in service (e.g. offering, worship, sermon), nor in any authoritative/teaching setting (Sunday school, leading small group, etc.).</p> <p>We understand that some members may feel a strong conviction and stance on these issues; while they are welcome to express their views, if they behave in a way that disrespects or diminishes those who don't share their views then CBCGB may respond with discipline or excluding them from membership.</p> <p>By default, we expect leaders and members to submit to the ruling authorities; this does not mean they need to agree with the issue, merely that they submit to the</p>	<p>We warmly welcome anyone regardless of their view on these subjects. These are typically the most controversial issues, and we will strive to recognize and respect that people will have diverse viewpoints.</p>

			legal stance and government whether on a federal, state, local level as applicable.	
Issues permitting sin, where we feel the Bible speaks clearly against those issues.	Abortion, Homosexuality, Adultery, Divorce	<p>We will preach against abortion in all church venues including sermons, small groups, retreats, etc. We may use church email lists, website, etc. to speak on the issue.</p> <p>We will not use church email lists, website, etc. to promote participation in political events, picketing against abortion clinics, etc.</p>	<p>Leaders and members should not be promoting the issue outside the church such as through social media, regardless of their personal stance.</p> <p>Leaders and members are welcome to participate in or arrange political involvement, picketing against abortion clinics, etc., as long as these are not done through official church avenues such as church email lists, postering on church grounds, etc.</p>	<p>We will warmly welcome anyone into the congregation who has had an abortion. We will not discriminate against, nor treat worse, anyone who has had an abortion.</p> <p>If congregants undergo an abortion or are involved in supporting abortion activities, they are still welcome to attend CBCGB but will be excluded from membership from the church.</p> <p>We would not welcome anyone into our church who is actively involved in promoting or performing abortion.</p>
Issues mandating sin, where we feel the Bible speaks clearly against those issues.	Forcing Christian doctors to perform abortions.	<p>We will preach against abortion in all church venues including sermons, small groups, retreats, etc. We may use church email lists, website, etc. to speak on the issue.</p> <p>We may use church email lists, website, etc. to promote participation in political events, picketing against abortion clinics, etc.</p>	<p>Leaders and members can speak out against abortion outside the church such as through social media.</p> <p>Leaders and members are welcome to participate in or arrange political involvement.</p>	<p>We will warmly welcome anyone into the congregation who has had an abortion or has performed an abortion in the past. We will not discriminate against, nor treat worse, anyone in these categories..</p> <p>We would not welcome anyone into our church who is actively involved in promoting or performing abortions.</p>
Issues where a defenseless people group are being	Abortion, imprisoned missionaries, countries	We will preach against religious restrictions in all church venues	Leaders and members can speak out against religious restrictions such as through social media.	We would not welcome anyone into our church who is actively involved in

oppressed	with religious restrictions	including sermons, small groups, retreats, etc. We may use church email lists, website, etc. to speak on the issue.	Leaders and members are welcome to participate in or arrange political involvement.	religious restrictions..
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