THE QUESTION

What did the early church believe about politics and government?

Asked by a THF member on November 5, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 10 numbered quotations · the 19 early Christian passages and 155 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-church-believe-about-politics-and-government

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

The early writers taught that God, not the devil, sets up earthly rulers to hold back evil. Christians paid their taxes, honored rulers, and prayed for them. But they would not swear by the emperor's fortune or obey commands against God, and they saw their first loyalty as belonging to Christ and his Church.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
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POINT 1 OF 7

God, not the devil, sets up rulers

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus answers people who said earthly kingdoms belong to the devil. He reads Paul's words about the higher powers as speaking of real human rulers, and he says God gave these authorities for the good of the nations.

1 “It is not he who has appointed the kingdoms of this world, but God; for "the heart of the king is in the hand of God."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book V* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 7, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

2 “Earthly authority, therefore, has been established by God for the benefit of nations, and not by the devil, who never rests, and does not desire even peaceful nations.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book V* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 8, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Government holds back evil, but rulers face judgment

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus says God gave human laws and the fear of the sword because people had turned away from the fear of God. He adds that rulers who act unjustly or like tyrants will themselves face God's judgment.

3 “Under human authority, people may avoid destroying each other like fishes, and through the establishment of laws, excessive wickedness among nations may be restrained.”

later in the same passage

“But whatever actions undermine justice, done unjustly, impiously, illegally, and tyrannically, in these they too shall perish; for the just judgment of God applies to all, without deficiency.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book V* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 8, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
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POINT 3 OF 7

Christians paid taxes and honored rulers

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Justin tells the emperors that Christians are quick to pay their taxes because Christ taught them to give Caesar what is his. He says they worship God alone but gladly serve rulers in other matters and pray for them to judge wisely.

4

"And everywhere, more readily than all others, we strive to pay the taxes, both regular and extraordinary, to those appointed by you, as we have been taught by Him."

later in the same passage

"Thus, we worship God alone, but in other matters, we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your kingly power, you may also be found to possess sound judgment."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *First Apology* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 5, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Prayer was their main help to rulers

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen says Christians help kings most by praying for them, which he calls a divine help. The church's liturgy also asked God to guide the king, the army and the magistrates, showing that prayer for rulers was part of worship.

5

"Our answer is that, when the occasion requires it, we do give help to kings, and, so to speak, a divine help, by putting on the whole armor of God."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 73 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 17, page 7** Read it in the library ›

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6

"Guide and direct the king, the army, the magistrates, the councils, the peoples, the neighborhoods, and all our goings out and comings in, in complete peace."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Early Liturgies,** *Divine Liturgy of St. Mark* 1 (c. 200–400 AD) **Source 15, page 7** Read it in the library ›

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POINT 5 OF 7

Obedience stopped where God's law was broken

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen warns against seeking a ruler's favor through cruelty, impiety or flattery, even while Christians avoid stirring up rulers needlessly. Polycarp, facing death, refused to swear by Caesar's fortune, yet he still spoke of giving due honor to authorities ordained by God.

7 “Moreover, we must despise trying to win the favor of kings or any other men, not only when their favor must be gained by murders, sexual sin, or acts of cruelty, but even when it requires impiety toward God, or any slavish words of flattery and submission.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 65 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 18, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
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8 “But Polycarp said, "To you I have thought it right to offer an account [of my faith]; for we are taught to give all due honor (which entails no injury upon ourselves) to the powers and authorities which are ordained of God. But as for these, I do not consider them worthy of receiving any account from me."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Polycarp,** *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (c. 100–155 AD) **Source 4, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

Their deeper service belonged to the Church

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Answering a critic who urged Christians to hold public office, Origen says Christians belong to another order founded by the Word of God. He explains that they held back from office not to dodge duty but to serve God's Church for the salvation of others.

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9 “But in each state, we recognize another national order, founded by the Word of God.”

later in the same passage

“And Christians do not refuse public offices in order to escape public duties, but so that they may keep themselves for a more divine and necessary service in the Church of God, for the salvation of men.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 75 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 16, page 7** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 7

Christians live in the world, not of it

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

The Epistle to Diognetus compares Christians to the soul in a body. They live in every city and share its life, but they do not belong to the world, and by their presence they help preserve it.

10 “The soul dwells in the body, yet is not of the body; and Christians live in the world, yet are not of the world.”

later in the same passage

“The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet preserves that very body; and Christians are confined in the world as if in a prison, and yet they are the preservers of the world.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Mathetes,** *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. 80–200 AD) **Source 2, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages come from a time when Christians lived under pagan emperors, so they do not speak to voting or modern forms of government.
- Early writers did not all agree on every civic duty, such as whether a Christian could serve as a soldier.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

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WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 19 early Christian passages and 155 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–19, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 20–151, in Bible order), then 23 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *19 passages from 11 writers*

Mathetes, *c. 80–200 AD · sources 1–2*

1 *Epistle to Diognetus* (1885 English; on point 7) are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh… [continues online] **read ›**

2 *Epistle to Diognetus* **Quote 10, page 5** sum up everything in one word—what the soul is in the body, that Christians are in the world. The soul is spread throughout all the members of the body… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · source 3*

3 *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* (1885 English; on point 2) "if he that rises up against kings is justly held worthy of punishment, inasmuch as he dissolves public order, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought… [continues online] **read ›**

Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · source 4*

4 *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** we are taught to give all due honour (which entails no injury upon ourselves) to the powers and authorities which are ordained of God… [continues online] **read ›**

Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · source 5*

5 *First Apology* (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** "He answered, "Tell Me, whose image does the coin bear?" And they said, "Cæsar's." And again He answered them, "Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's… [continues online] **read ›**

Theophilus of Antioch, *c. 169–183 AD · source 6*

6 *To Autolycus* 14 (on point 4) concerning subjection to authorities and powers, and prayer for them, the divine word gives us instructions… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 7–8*

7 *Against Heresies: Book V* **Quote 1, page 2** "me, chiefs are raised up, and by me, kings rule the earth… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Against Heresies: Book V* (1885 English) **Quotes 2, 3, page 2** "whatsoever they do to the subversion of justice, iniquitously, and impiously, and illegally, and tyrannically, in these things shall they also perish… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 9–12*

9 *Stromata* 1.25 who live an active and just life, joined with contemplation, statesmen. He divides that part of politics called Law into administrative greatness of soul and private good order, which he… [continues online] **read ›**

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10 *Stromata* 1.25 “law as commanding us to look to one God and to act justly. He says that there are two kinds of politics: the branch of law, and that of politics… [continues online] **read ›**

11 *Instructor* 3.12 (1885 English; on point 3) “of civil government: Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Stromata* 1.24 “those who practice virtue in this way. Divine things are ordered by wisdom, and human affairs by politics, all things by the kingly power. He, then, is a king who… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 13–14*

13 *Apology* 35 (on point 5) then, is why Christians are counted as public enemies: because they do not give the emperor empty, false, and foolish honors. As people who believe in the true religion, they… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *De Corona* 11 (1885 English) “begin with the real ground of the military crown, I think we must first inquire whether warfare is proper at all for Christians… [continues online] **read ›**

Early Liturgies, *c. 200–400 AD · source 15*

15 *Divine Liturgy of St. Mark* 1 **Quote 6, page 3** “and direct the king, the army, the magistrates, the councils, the peoples, the neighborhoods, and all our goings out and comings in, in complete peace… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 16–18*

16 *Against Celsus* 75 **Quote 9, page 5** “if those who govern in the Church, and are called rulers of the divine nation—that is, the… [continues online] **read ›**

17 *Against Celsus* 73 **Quote 5, page 3** “kings, and for all that are in authority… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Against Celsus* 65 **Quote 7, page 4** “we must despise trying to win the favor of kings or any other men, not only when their favor must be gained by murders, sexual sin, or acts of cruelty… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · source 19*

19 *Of the Manner in Which the Persecutors Died* 48 for the Divinity deserved our first and greatest attention. We thought it proper that both Christians and all others should have the freedom to follow whatever religion each one thinks… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *132 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

20 **Exodus 14:14** The Lord shall fight for you, and you shall keep silent.” **read ›**

21 **Exodus 17:16** For with a hidden hand the Lord wages war against Amalek from generation to generation. **read ›**

22 **Deuteronomy 16:18** You shall appoint for yourself judges and officers in your cities that the Lord your God is giving you, tribe by tribe, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. **read ›**

23 **1 Samuel 2:10** The Lord will make his adversary weak; the Lord is holy. Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast in his might, and let not the rich man boast in his wealth; but let the one who boasts boast in this: to understand and know the Lord, and to do judgment and righteousness in the midst of the earth. The Lord has gone up to the heavens and has thundered; he will judge the ends of the earth, and he gives strength to our kings, and he will exalt the horn of his Christ.” **read ›**

24 **Ezra 4:3** But Zerubbabel and Jesus and the rest of the heads of families of Israel said to them, “It is not for us and you to build a house to our God; for we ourselves together will build for the Lord our God, as Cyrus king of the Persians commanded us.” **read ›**

25 **Ezra 4:14** And it is not lawful for us to see the king’s dishonor; therefore we have sent and informed the king, **read ›**

26 **Ezra 7:2** the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, **read ›**

27 **Ezra 9:12** Now therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, and do not take their daughters for your sons; and you shall never seek their peace or their good, so that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it as an inheritance to your sons forever.’ **read ›**

28 **Ezra 9:13** And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great trespass—for there is none like our God, for you have lightened our acts of lawlessness and given us salvation— **read ›**

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29 **Nehemiah 4:20** In whatever place you hear the sound of the horn, gather to us there; and our God will fight for us." (Septuagint 2 Esdras 14:14 (Nehemiah 4:20 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

30 **Nehemiah 10:14** The rulers of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu; (Septuagint 2 Esdras 20:15 (Nehemiah 10:14 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

31 **Esther 8:11** in which he commanded them to use their own laws in every city, and to come to their own aid, and to deal with their opponents and those who attacked them as they wished, **read ›**

32 **Psalms 2:10** And now, O kings, understand; be instructed, all you who judge the earth. **read ›**

33 **Psalms 22:28** For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he rules over the nations. (Septuagint Psalm 21:29 (Psalm 22:28 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

34 **Psalms 148:11** kings of the earth and all peoples, rulers and all judges of the earth; **read ›**

35 **Proverbs 3:19** God by wisdom founded the earth, and by sound judgment he prepared the heavens. **read ›**

36 **Proverbs 8:13** The fear of the Lord hates unrighteousness, arrogance and pride and the ways of the wicked; and I hate the perverse ways of evil men. **read ›**

37 **Proverbs 8:15** By me kings reign, and rulers write decrees of righteousness. **read ›**

38 **Proverbs 8:16** By me nobles are made great, and by me sovereigns rule the earth. **read ›**

39 **Proverbs 8:29** and when he made strong the foundations of the earth, **read ›**

40 **Proverbs 14:19** The evil will fall before the good, and the ungodly will wait at the doors of the righteous. **read ›**

41 **Proverbs 15:19** The ways of the idle are strewn with thorns, but those of the courageous are well trodden. **read ›**

42 **Ecclesiastes 3:4** a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; **read ›**

43 **Ecclesiastes 6:9** Better is the sight of the eyes than wandering of the soul. This also is vanity and a choosing of the wind. **read ›**

44 **Ecclesiastes 8:4** as a king who has power; and who will say to him, "What are you doing?" **read ›**

45 **Ecclesiastes 11:3** If the clouds are filled with rain, they pour it out on the earth; and if a tree falls in the south or in the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will be. **read ›**

46 **Ecclesiastes 12:2** before the sun and the light are darkened, and the moon and the stars, and the clouds return after the rain; **read ›**

47 **Song of Solomon 3:7** Behold, Solomon's couch; sixty mighty men are all around it, of the mighty men of Israel. **read ›**

48 **Song of Solomon 7:11** Come, my kinsman, let us go out into the field; let us spend the night in the villages. (Septuagint Song of Solomon 7:12 (Song of Solomon 7:11 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

49 **Song of Solomon 7:12** Let us rise early to the vineyards; let us see whether the vine has flowered, whether the blossom has opened, whether the pomegranates have flowered. There I will give you my breasts. (Septuagint Song of Solomon 7:13 (Song of Solomon 7:12 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

50 **Isaiah 3:20** and the set of glorious ornaments, and the armlets, and the bracelets, and the braided work, and the rings, and the right-hand bracelets, **read ›**

51 **Isaiah 3:21** and the earrings, and the garments bordered with purple, and the garments with purple in the middle, **read ›**

52 **Isaiah 7:8** but the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and yet within sixty-five years the kingdom of Ephraim shall fail from being a people; **read ›**

53 **Isaiah 8:6** "Because this people does not desire the water of Siloam that flows gently, but desires to have Rezin and the son of Remaliah as king over you, **read ›**

54 **Isaiah 15:3** Wrap yourselves in sackcloth in her squares, and lament on her rooftops and in her lanes; all of you, wail with weeping. **read ›**

55 **Jeremiah 2:2** And he said: Thus says the Lord: I remember the mercy of your youth, and the love of your marriage, in following the Holy One of Israel, says the Lord. **read ›**

56 **Jeremiah 2:10** For go over to the islands of Kittim and see, and send to Kedar and consider carefully, and see whether such things have happened: **read ›**

57 **Ezekiel 3:14** And the Spirit lifted me and took me up, and I went in the impulse of my spirit; and the hand of the Lord was mighty upon me. **read ›**

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58 **Daniel 8:15** When I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking understanding, behold, there stood before me one with the appearance of a man. **read ›**

59 **Daniel 8:16** And I heard a man's voice in the midst of the Oubal, and he called and said, "Gabriel, make that man understand the vision." **read ›**

60 **Daniel 11:9** And he shall enter the kingdom of the king of the south and return to his own land. **read ›**

61 **Hosea 8:4** They made kings for themselves, but not through me; they ruled, and did not make it known to me. With their silver and their gold they made idols for themselves, so that they might be utterly destroyed. **read ›**

62 **Micah 1:15** until they bring the heirs, O inhabitant of Lachish; the inheritance will come as far as Adullam, the glory of the daughter of Israel. **read ›**

63 **Zephaniah 1:2** "With failing let it fail from the face of the land," says the Lord. **read ›**

64 **1 Esdras 4:3** But the king is stronger still; he is lord over them and master over them, and whatever he tells them, they obey. **read ›**

65 **1 Esdras 4:14** "Men, is not the king great, and are not men many, and is not wine strong? Who then rules over them, or who is lord over them? Is it not women? **read ›**

66 **1 Esdras 7:2** supervised the holy works very carefully, working together with the elders of the Jews and the temple officials. **read ›**

67 **1 Esdras 9:12** Let the leaders of the multitude stay, and let all those of our settlements who have foreign wives come at an appointed time, **read ›**

68 **1 Esdras 9:13** with the elders and the judges of each place, until we turn away the wrath of the Lord from us over this matter." **read ›**

69 **1 Esdras 9:38** And the whole multitude gathered together in the open square before the gate of the temple toward the east, **read ›**

70 **Wisdom of Solomon 6:21** If, then, you delight in thrones and scepters, O tyrants of the peoples, honor wisdom, that you may reign forever. **read ›**

71 **Wisdom of Solomon 18:9** For the holy children of good men offered sacrifice in secret, and in full agreement they established the divine law, that the holy ones would share alike in the same good things and dangers, the fathers already leading the songs of praise. **read ›**

72 **Wisdom of Sirach 4:28** Contend for the truth even to death, and the Lord God will fight for you. **read ›**

73 **Wisdom of Sirach 10:1** A wise judge will instruct his people, and the rule of a man of understanding will be well ordered. **read ›**

74 **Wisdom of Sirach 10:2** As the judge of his people is, so are his officials, and as the leader of the city is, so are all who live in it. **read ›**

75 **Wisdom of Sirach 44:3** those who ruled in their kingdoms, and men famous for their power; they will take counsel in their understanding, having made proclamations in prophecies; **read ›**

76 **Baruch 1:16** and to our kings and to our rulers and to our priests and to our prophets and to our fathers, **read ›**

77 **1 Maccabees 2:48** They rescued the law out of the hand of the nations and out of the hand of the kings, and they did not let the sinner triumph. **read ›**

78 **1 Maccabees 3:19** For victory in battle does not depend on the size of the army, but strength comes from heaven. **read ›**

79 **1 Maccabees 3:52** And behold, the nations have gathered together against us to destroy us; you know what they are plotting against us. **read ›**

80 **1 Maccabees 8:13** and those whom they wish to help and to make kings become kings, and those whom they wish, they depose; and they have been greatly exalted; **read ›**

81 **1 Maccabees 8:15** And they have made a senate house for themselves, and every day three hundred and twenty counselors deliberate continually about the people, to keep them in good order; **read ›**

82 **1 Maccabees 8:29** On these terms the Romans made an agreement with the people of the Jews. **read ›**

83 **1 Maccabees 14:19** And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. **read ›**

84 **1 Maccabees 15:19** So it has pleased us to write to the kings and the countries that they should not seek the harm of the Jews, nor make war on them or their cities or their country, nor make an alliance with those who make war on them. **read ›**

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85 **2 Maccabees 3:4** But a certain Simon, of the tribe of Benjamin, who had been appointed captain of the temple, fell out with the high priest about the lawlessness in the city; **read ›**

86 **2 Maccabees 4:31** So the king went quickly to settle matters, leaving as his deputy Andronicus, one of the men of high rank. **read ›**

87 **2 Maccabees 4:42** As a result they wounded many of them and struck down some, and they put all the rest to flight; and they killed the temple robber himself beside the treasury. **read ›**

88 **2 Maccabees 4:48** So those who had spoken for the city and the people and the holy vessels quickly suffered the unjust penalty. **read ›**

89 **2 Maccabees 5:23** and at Gerizim, Andronicus; and besides these, Menelaus, who lorded it over the citizens worse than the others, having a hostile attitude toward his fellow citizens the Jews. **read ›**

90 **2 Maccabees 6:9** and that they should slaughter those who would not choose to change over to Greek ways. So one could see the misery that had come. **read ›**

91 **2 Maccabees 8:18** “For they trust in weapons and in acts of daring,” he said, “but we trust in the Almighty God, who is able with a single nod to strike down those who are coming against us, and even the whole world.” **read ›**

92 **2 Maccabees 11:3** and to make the temple pay taxes like the other shrines of the nations, and to put the high priesthood up for sale every year. **read ›**

93 **2 Maccabees 11:23** Now that our father has passed on to the gods, we wish the subjects of the kingdom to be free from disturbance and to attend to their own affairs. **read ›**

94 **2 Maccabees 12:2** But among the local governors, Timothy and Apollonius the son of Gennaeus, and also Hieronymus and Demophon, and besides these Nicanor the Cypriarch, would not let them settle down and live in quiet. **read ›**

95 **2 Maccabees 13:23** he learned that Philip, who had been left in charge of the government in Antioch, had become desperate; the king was thrown into confusion; he appealed to the Jews, yielded, and swore to all their just terms; he was reconciled and offered sacrifice, honored the temple, and showed kindness to the place; **read ›**

96 **2 Maccabees 14:8** first, out of genuine concern for the king’s interests, and second, with regard also for my own fellow citizens; for through the foolishness of those I have mentioned our whole race is suffering no small misfortune. **read ›**

97 **2 Maccabees 14:22** Judas posted armed men in readiness at key places, lest some treachery should suddenly come from the enemy; and they held a fitting conference. **read ›**

98 **2 Maccabees 14:38** For in the former times of separation he had been brought to trial for Judaism, and he had risked body and soul for Judaism with all earnestness. **read ›**

99 **2 Maccabees 15:16** “Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which you will shatter the adversaries.” **read ›**

100 **2 Maccabees 15:24** By the greatness of your arm may those who come with blasphemy against your holy people be struck with terror.” And with these words he ended. **read ›**

101 **2 Maccabees 15:26** but those with Judas met the enemy with invocation and prayers. **read ›**

102 **3 Maccabees 3:7** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

103 **3 Maccabees 7:11** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

104 **3 Maccabees 7:12** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

105 **4 Maccabees 3:20** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

106 **4 Maccabees 3:21** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

107 **4 Maccabees 5:38** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

108 **4 Maccabees 7:8** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

109 **4 Maccabees 8:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

110 **4 Maccabees 9:23** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

111 **4 Maccabees 15:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

112 **4 Maccabees 16:23** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

113 **1 Enoch 62:6** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

114 **Matthew 1:9** Uzziah became the father of Jotham. Jotham became the father of Ahaz. Ahaz became the father of Hezekiah. **read ›**

115 **Luke 10:5** Into whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house.’ **read ›**

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116 **Luke 14:3** Jesus spoke to the experts in the law and the Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” **read ›**

117 **Luke 22:25** He said to them, “The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ **read ›**

118 **Acts 2:44** All who believed were together, and had all things in common. **read ›**

119 **Acts 4:32** The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul. No one said that any of his possessions was his own, but they had all things in common. **read ›**

120 **Acts 12:1** About that time King Herod laid hands on some of the church to mistreat them. **read ›**

121 **Acts 14:21** After preaching the gospel in that city and making many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, **read ›**

122 **Acts 14:23** They appointed elders for them in every church and, after prayer with fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **read ›**

123 **Acts 15:2** After considerable dissension and debate between Paul and Barnabas and these men, Paul and Barnabas and some others from among them were appointed to go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this question. **read ›**

124 **Acts 15:7** After much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that long ago God chose among us that through my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. **read ›**

125 **Acts 15:22** Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: Judas called Barsabbas and Silas, leading men among the brothers. **read ›**

126 **Acts 16:35** When day came, the magistrates sent the officers, saying, “Release those men.” **read ›**

127 **Acts 16:38** The officers reported these words to the magistrates, who were afraid when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, **read ›**

128 **Acts 20:28** Therefore pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock among whom the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to shepherd the church of the Lord and God, which he purchased with his own blood. **read ›**

129 **Acts 26:10** I also did this in Jerusalem. I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. **read ›**

130 **Romans 13:1** Let every soul be in subjection to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those who exist are ordained by God. **read ›**

131 **Romans 13:2** Therefore he who resists the authority withstands the ordinance of God; and those who withstand will themselves receive judgment. **read ›**

132 **Romans 13:3** For rulers are not a terror to good works but to evil works. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do good, and you will have praise from it, **read ›**

133 **Romans 13:4** for he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is a servant of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who does evil. **read ›**

134 **1 Corinthians 1:16** I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. **read ›**

135 **1 Corinthians 11:18** For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and I partly believe it. **read ›**

136 **2 Corinthians 10:3** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh; **read ›**

137 **2 Corinthians 10:4** for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God for the throwing down of strongholds, **read ›**

138 **Ephesians 6:12** For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world’s rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. **read ›**

139 **Philippians 2:15** so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **read ›**

140 **Philippians 3:3** For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and boast in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh, **read ›**

141 **Colossians 2:15** Having stripped the principalities and powers, he made a public display of them, triumphing over them through the cross. **read ›**

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142 **1 Timothy 1:18** I entrust this command to you, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, so that by them you may wage the good warfare, **read ›**

143 **1 Timothy 2:2** for kings and all who are in high places, that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and reverence. **read ›**

144 **2 Timothy 2:3** You therefore, endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. **read ›**

145 **2 Timothy 2:4** No soldier on duty entangles himself in the affairs of life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. **read ›**

146 **Titus 3:1** Remind them to be in subjection to rulers and to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, **read ›**

147 **1 Peter 2:13** Therefore subject yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether to the king, as supreme, **read ›**

148 **1 Peter 2:14** or to governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evildoers and for praise to those who do well. **read ›**

149 **1 Peter 2:17** Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. **read ›**

150 **3 John 1:9** I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us. **read ›**

151 **Revelation 13:7** It was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation was given to him. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *23 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Matthew 4:9 · 5:44 · 6:3 · 6:33 · 17:27 · 22:21

Mark 12:14 · 12:17

Luke 4:6 · 12:48 · 20:20 · 20:25

John 17:11

Romans 13:6 · 13:7

2 Corinthians 4:8 · 4:12 · 5:1 · 6:9 · 6:10

Philippians 2:10 · 3:20

1 Peter 2:11

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early church believe about politics and government?” on November 5, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY