

Civics: A Christian Worldview.
The Bible and *The Law*. Government's Proper Role (20-25 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Instructions

1. **Objective:** Students review five scenarios and explain why they are improper uses of government force, then compare to the Bible's teaching on government's proper role.
2. Print a copy of Pages 2 and 3 for each student (front to back if possible!), and hand out.
3. Read the instructions together, and answer any questions.
4. Give students 15 minutes to answer individually, then discuss together as pairs/groups/tables.
5. When groups are finished discussing together, discuss as a class. Ask for many volunteers!

Answer Key

1. **Student loan forgiveness**
 - **Activity:** Charity/redistribution
 - **Force:** Taxation
 - **Issue:** Takes property from some to benefit others without consent.
2. **Crop limits or destruction**
 - **Activity:** Agriculture
 - **Force:** Legal penalties
 - **Issue:** Destroys productive labor instead of preventing harm.
3. **Corporate bailouts**
 - **Activity:** Business
 - **Force:** Taxation
 - **Issue:** Socializes losses while privatizing profits.
4. **Government-funded art**
 - **Activity:** Art
 - **Force:** Taxation
 - **Issue:** Forces citizens to support expression they may reject.
5. **Mandates violating conscience**
 - **Activity:** Religion/moral action
 - **Force:** Legal penalties
 - **Issue:** Compels moral contradiction.

Key Takeaway

The Bible teaches that government exists to restrain evil and punish wrongdoing, not to manage peaceful human activity. When government uses force to control these, it goes beyond being “a terror to evil” and becomes a source of injustice.

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Remember that the Bible teaches that government exists to restrain evil (harm, theft), saying that the purpose of government is to be “*not a terror to good works, but to the evil...for he [the ruler] is...a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*” (Romans 13:3).

<p>Scenario 1: The federal government cancels large amounts of student loan debt and shifts the financial cost to taxpayers. People who did not attend college or who already paid off their loans are required to help fund the program through taxes.</p>	<p>What action is the government taking?</p> <p>What human activity is being organized by law (labor, charity, religion, agriculture, business, art, or education?)</p> <p>What force/penalty is used to enforce this policy?</p> <p>Why is this not a proper role for government?</p>
<p>Scenario 2: The government collects tax money and distributes it to certain farmers to support specific crops or agricultural businesses. These payments continue even when farms are profitable and consumers willingly buy their products.</p>	<p>What action is the government taking?</p> <p>What human activity is being organized by law (labor, charity, religion, agriculture, business, art, or education?)</p> <p>What force/penalty is used to enforce this policy?</p> <p>Why is this not a proper role for government?</p>
<p>Scenario 3: During economic downturns, the government uses taxpayer funds to rescue large corporations or banks that face financial collapse. Citizens are required to cover these losses even if they never benefited from the companies' earlier profits.</p>	<p>What action is the government taking?</p> <p>What human activity is being organized by law (labor, charity, religion, agriculture, business, art, or education?)</p> <p>What force/penalty is used to enforce this policy?</p> <p>Why is this not a proper role for government?</p>
<p>Scenario 5: Tax money is used to fund art projects, museums, or performances selected by government agencies. Citizens are required to support these works financially even if they find them offensive or morally objectionable.</p>	<p>What action is the government taking?</p> <p>What human activity is being organized by law (labor, charity, religion, agriculture, business, art, or education?)</p> <p>What force/penalty is used to enforce this policy?</p> <p>Why is this not a proper role for government?</p>
<p>Scenario 5: Christian schools are required to teach or affirm material in health or social-studies classes that contradict their stated beliefs. Schools that refuse may lose state recognition or the ability to operate legally.</p>	<p>What action is the government taking?</p> <p>What human activity is being organized by law (labor, charity, religion, agriculture, business, art, or education?)</p> <p>What force/penalty is used to enforce this policy?</p> <p>Why is this not a proper role for government?</p>