

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview:
Founding a Free State, Part 2 – Limits & Requirements (15-20 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Goal

Students work in groups to consider what limitations they would place on both government officials and potential voters when setting up a government, as well as rights for the people and limitations they would place upon a militia.

Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of 2–4.
2. Read the instructions together as a class.
3. Give students about 12–15 minutes to complete the questions and discuss their answers in pairs/groups.
4. Ask for volunteers to offer their answers, and discuss as a class.

Wrap-Up/Final Direction

- Students will have a variety of answers in their sections, so allow a good amount of discussion!
- Steer students toward being stringent on requirements or limitations, to provide for the most liberty for individuals and less of a chance that their government will become oppressive.
- If you notice any answers that students give that open up the possibility of restricting individual rights or allowing the government to violate those rights, ask the student/pair/group: “How could [student answer] potentially lead to violation of rights?”
- Stress to students that the Bible strictly limits the proper functions of government—ask for volunteers to give as many of the Bible verses you’ve talked about that describe governments legitimate functions (executing judgment and justice, delivering the “spoiled from the hand of the oppressor,” removing “violence and spoil [theft],” being a “terror” to “evil [harm],” punishing “evildoers [those that harm or steal from others],” and so on).

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You have been chosen to help set up a government for a newly-begun state/nation. You must make proposals on the components below—ones that protect the rights of individuals and limit the powers of government officials. Take 5–7 minutes to come up with proposals individually, and then discuss your ideas with your partner/other group members.

1. How will you *limit* the powers of the following branches of government? (This is not a list of powers *granted* to each branch, but a list of *limits* upon each branch.)

- Legislative/Lawmakers –
- Executive/President/Governor –
- Judicial/Courts –



2. What requirements will you place on eligible voters? (Individuals will be allowed to vote if they ____.)
3. What individual rights will this new government be forbidden to interfere with?
4. Nearly all families in your state are armed. There has been talk of creating a state army outside of individuals. Will your government create an army? If so, what dangers could this army pose, and what limitations will you place upon it so it doesn't violate the rights of the people?
5. "What requirements must a person meet to hold government office, such as age, years of citizenship, or property ownership?"