



The Gospel Doctrine Class



Doctrine & Covenants - Lesson 44

Being Good Citizens

"We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society." (D&C 134:1)

D&C 58:21–22, 26–28; 98:4–10; 134;
Articles of Faith 1:12

A study of this lesson will encourage us to be good citizens by participating in government, obeying the law, and strengthening the community.

Elder Erastus Snow: "...any and all forms of government are better than none at all, having a tendency as they do to restrain the passions of human nature and to curb them, and to establish and maintain order to a greater or less degree. One monopoly is better than many; and the oppression of a mob, where every man is a law to himself and his own right arm, is his power to enforce his own will, is the worst form of government." (Journal of Discourses, 22:151)

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." (1st Amendment, Constitution of the United States of America)

Elder L. Tom Perry: "As Church members, we live under the banner of many different flags. How important it is that we understand our place and our position in the lands in which we live! We should be familiar with the history, heritage, and laws of the lands that govern us. In those countries that allow us the right to participate in the affairs of government, we should use our free agency and be actively engaged in supporting and defending the principles of truth, right, and freedom." (Conference Report, Oct 1987)

"The Church is politically neutral. It does not endorse political parties, platforms, or candidates. Candidates

should not imply that they are endorsed by the Church or its leaders. Church leaders and members should avoid any statements or conduct that might be interpreted as Church endorsement of political parties or candidates." (Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: [1998], 325)

Joseph F. Smith: "I wish to enter here my avowal that the people called Latter-day Saints, as has been often repeated from this stand, are the most law-abiding, the most peaceable, long-suffering and patient people that can today be found within the confines of this republic, and perhaps anywhere else upon the face of the earth; and we intend to continue to be law-abiding so far as the constitutional law of the land is concerned; and we expect to meet the consequences of our obedience to the laws and commandments of God, like men." (Gospel Doctrine, p406)

Elder M. Russell Ballard: "In the Church, we often state the couplet, 'Be in the world but not of the world.' ... Perhaps we should state the couplet ... as two separate admonitions. First, 'Be in the world.' Be involved; be informed. Try to be understanding and tolerant and to appreciate diversity. Make meaningful contributions to society through service and involvement. Second, 'Be not of the world.' Do not follow wrong paths or bend to accommodate or accept what is not right. ...

"Members of the Church need to influence more than we are influenced. We should work to stem the tide of sin and evil instead of passively being swept along by it. We each need to help solve the problem rather than avoid or ignore it." (Conference Report, Apr 1989)

Next Week's Reading Assignment
Class Member Study Guide and
"The Family: A Proclamation to the World"