



"Wisdom is your perspective on life, your sense of balance, your understanding of how the various parts and principles apply and relate to each other. It embraces judgment, discernment, comprehension. It is a gestalt or oneness, and integrated wholeness."

—Stephen R. Covey

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Can Heart and Mind Be Separate?

‘Tis the season of much debate and social strife between the Right and the Left over a perennial topic, the separation of church and state. Though the issue is hot year-round—cropping up in cases involving religious texts being displayed or spoken in public forums—it reaches a boiling point in the cold season of [Christmas](#). One side argues that Christ has been taken out of Christmas (an event that He was never "in" to begin with), while the other side argues that He or any other religion-specific figure has no business in a public holiday.

Americans who align themselves with the Right tend to follow the former, while those on the Left adhere to the latter. The Left has enacted wacky legalistic laws to separate religion from public life, such as requiring any traditional Nativity scene to be so many feet away from public space. However, the opposing side's insistence that Christ is at the heart of

Christmas could not be more misguided. This annual Christmas debate serves as only one case study among many separation-of-church-and-state controversies.

It is common knowledge that many of the earliest settlers who sailed from England to the Americas did so to escape the intolerant and often ruthless rule of the state-supported Church of England. However, the Pilgrims did not seek a secular existence separate from religion in the New World, only freedom from the state imposing one particular religion on all. The settlers did not envision a citizenry with personal, religious lives distinctly separate from their secular, public lives, but a public tolerance of various religions, reinforcing the values universal to them all. The Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule are values that no sect of Christianity—or truly any religion—would find objectionable. In fact, America's Founders allowed these, not only to be present in public life, but also even to guide public life.

The strict separation of church and state that is pushed and implemented now represents a historically new philosophy of culture. It is new because prior cultures understood what [God](#) shows to be true in His Word: Personal and public life cannot be separated. One's personal life will inevitably guide one's public life. The earliest major civilizations in recorded history, those in the Fertile Crescent, held no distinction between religious and public life, as these cultures undoubtedly grew out of—but perverted—the culture Noah instituted after the Flood. Nations emerging from the Fertile Crescent cultures generally saw the governors of the state as ranking highest in the social hierarchy, and they were therefore directly linked to their gods.

When God established Israel in the Promised Land, He ordered kings to write out His law by hand, and commanded all of the people of Israel to write these laws on their hearts. Civil law and God's law were one in ancient Israel. Israel has been the only civilization to have God's law as civil law, and will remain the only historical instance of such a union until God restores His Kingdom. Nevertheless, nearly every Western state since has fused the civil and religious.

God ordains a union of civil and religious life because, as He shows through His Word, for man to live otherwise is for him to live contrary to his nature. [Jesus Christ](#) teaches in [Matthew 6:24](#), "No one can serve two masters," yet

this is precisely what current advocates of strict separation of church and state want. He explains, ". . . either he will hate the one and [love](#) the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other." Earlier, Christ had said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" ([Matthew 6: 21](#)).

Though in these verses Jesus refers specifically to wealth, the principle can be expanded to embrace what we treasure, our private and social values, which will be aligned with our hearts, the center of our religious devotion. Christ's teaching explains why God instructed Israelites to write His laws on their hearts. It also explains why, when Israel failed in this, the nation came crashing down. This is not to say that the United States should revive the medieval theocratic state, yet it exposes how modern states strictly separate all religion from the public space, conflicting with human nature and the way God wants His children to live.

The origin of the current view of separation ultimately stems from an evolutionary viewpoint. Evolutionary thought requires man to be nothing more than a compilation of mechanical, instinct-driven, psychological systems developed over time, with rationality as the most recent addition and apex of this development. Evolutionary psychologists arbitrarily demarcate different functions of the human brain as discrete from each other, such as rationality, creativity, and emotion, arguing they developed independently at different times in history. This causes the mind and consciousness to lose their status as a process of complex unified functions; they become merely a machine with different parts and sectors that are not necessarily dependent.

This compartmentalizing of the brain leads to the compartmentalization of life. The sexual liberation movement of the 60s and 70s demonstrates an instance of this process. During these years, people began to believe that physical sexuality was just an appetite that need not affect any other area of life. This lie has resulted in uncounted divorces and irreparable damage to its adherents' emotions and relationships.

It is impossible for one to designate different modes of living—secular in public space and religious in private—yet this is what advocates of a strict separation of church and state demand. As children of God, preparing to serve in His Kingdom, we must be entirely devoted to Him. Paul uses civil

language to describe our relationship with God, writing in [Philippians 3:20](#), "For our citizenship is in heaven," and in [II Corinthians 5:20](#), "Now then, we are [ambassadors for Christ](#)." As [Christians](#), our devotion to God demands a singular governance over our hearts that directs every action, whether public or private.

Until God establishes His Kingdom, people will continue to compartmentalize themselves to justify [sin](#) and departure from God. We, however, have been commissioned by Christ to make a total commitment to God ([Luke 14:33](#)). By doing so, we set an example to [the world](#) of [peace](#) and [joy](#), being mentally unified in our purpose of serving God. In [Matthew 5:16](#), Jesus encourages us, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good words and glorify your Father in heaven."

- Staff

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by Martin G. Collins

Our society has determined that everyone's opinion is of equal value, regardless of how ridiculous and sinful it is. There are numerous fallacious reasoning patterns to which we can all fall prey. These twisted thinking patterns are seen in a number of incidents recorded throughout the Bible as well as in our daily lives. As we, through the power of God's Holy Spirit and the mind of Christ, continue to grow in godly knowledge, we should learn to recognize and guard against these deceptive thought patterns (or anything else that exalts itself against the knowledge of God) displacing them with godly wisdom- pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy (James 3:17), in short, taking on the divine nature of God.

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by John W. Ritenbaugh

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