



POLITICS BELONGS TO GOD

A LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN GHANA

APOSTLE DR
JOHN ENYONAM KWAKU KPIKPI
B.Sc.(GH) D.Phil. (Sussex)

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Apostle Dr John Enyonam Kwaku Kpikpi,
B.Sc.(GH) D.Phil. (Sussex)

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"Politics is too important to be abandoned to corruption. It belongs to the God who created nations and who still calls His people to serve there."

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My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

For many years I have watched with gratitude as the Church in Ghana has served our nation with remarkable faithfulness. Across our towns and villages, in our cities and our universities, in hospitals, schools, businesses and homes, countless followers of Jesus Christ have quietly devoted themselves to serving God and blessing their neighbours.

We have prayed for our nation in times of peace and in times of crisis. We have preached the Gospel, cared for the poor, educated the young, healed the sick, strengthened families and proclaimed the hope that is found only in Jesus Christ.

For all this, I give thanks to God.

Yet over the years a conviction has steadily grown within me—a conviction that has become impossible to ignore.

I have come to believe that there remains one great field of service from which many sincere followers of Christ have unintentionally withdrawn.

It is a field that affects every family, every community and every generation. It is a field that shapes education, healthcare, justice, economic opportunity and national security. It is a field that influences whether the weak are protected or exploited, whether

honesty is rewarded or punished, whether a nation flourishes or declines.

That field is the governance of our nation.

For many Christians, politics has become a place to avoid rather than a place to serve. The reasons are understandable. Politics often appears to be dominated by corruption, deception, bitterness, manipulation, violence and the relentless pursuit of power. In Ghana we have captured this perception in a familiar saying:

"Politics is a dirty game."

Many sincere believers have therefore concluded that faithful followers of Jesus Christ should keep away from politics altogether. Pray for those in authority, yes. Vote responsibly, perhaps. But become involved? Surely not.

For many years I understood and even sympathised with this conclusion.

Indeed, when friends first heard that I was entering politics, some responded with genuine alarm. One dear Christian woman, whom I respected greatly, knelt before me with tears in her eyes and pleaded that I should abandon the idea.

"They will spoil your name," she said. *"They will harm you."*

Others expressed the same concern more quietly but with equal sincerity.

"John, this world is too corrupt for someone like you. Please stay away."

I never dismissed those words lightly. They were spoken out of love, not criticism. They reflected a deep desire to protect both my ministry and my reputation.

Yet as I prayed over these matters, another question gradually emerged.

It was no longer,

"Should a Christian enter politics?".

Instead, a far deeper question presented itself:

"Does God get involved in politics?"

That question changed everything.

For if God Himself has abandoned the governance of nations, then His people should certainly stay away.

But if He has never abandoned it...

If He has repeatedly entered it...

If He has consistently placed His servants within it...

Then politics cannot be territory that belongs to darkness alone.

It belongs to God.



JOSEPH

When God Saved a Nation Through Government

"The LORD was with Joseph..."
— Genesis 39:2a

If we wish to know whether God is interested in politics, we need not begin with modern democracies.

We need only open the first book of the Bible.

The story of Joseph is one of the best-loved accounts in all of Scripture. We have preached countless sermons about his dreams, his faithfulness in adversity, his resistance to temptation, his forgiveness of his brothers, and the remarkable providence of God that turned years of suffering into unimaginable blessing.

Every one of these themes deserves the attention it has received.

Yet there is something extraordinary about Joseph's life that has remained hidden in plain sight.

His greatest work did not take place in his father's tent.

It did not take place in Potiphar's house.

It did not take place in the prison.

His life's greatest work took place in government.

Joseph became the chief administrator of the greatest nation of his day.

Under Pharaoh's authority, he was entrusted with the management of Egypt's economy, its food security, its long-term planning and, ultimately, the preservation of countless human lives.

In today's language, we might describe him as a Prime Minister, Vice-President or Chief Executive of Government.

Whatever title we choose, one fact remains unmistakably clear:

Joseph's highest calling was exercised through his service in Pharaoh's government.

That observation changes the way we read his story.

For generations we have celebrated Joseph's character while paying comparatively little attention to the sphere in which that character was displayed.

His integrity was needed to govern well.

His wisdom mattered because he governed.

His discernment was needed to govern well.

His dependence upon God was needed to govern well.

God was not merely preparing a man to survive suffering.

He was preparing a leader to govern a nation.

The years of rejection by his brothers, the loneliness of slavery, the false accusation in Potiphar's house and the forgotten years in prison were not random episodes in Joseph's life.

They became God's school for public leadership.

Before Joseph was entrusted with Egypt's resources, he first had to become a man whose character was greater than his authority.

How desperately our own generation needs that lesson.

Modern politics often assumes that leadership is primarily about popularity, ambition or personal advancement.

God's dealings with Joseph reveal something entirely different.

In the Kingdom of God, public authority is entrusted to those whose inner lives have first been shaped by humility, faithfulness and obedience.

Joseph was prepared for service.

Nor should we overlook another remarkable truth?

Throughout Joseph's story, one sentence quietly echoes like the refrain of a hymn:

"The LORD was with Joseph."

The Lord was with Joseph in the pit.

The Lord was with Joseph in slavery.

The Lord was with Joseph in prison.

And the Lord was with Joseph in the palace.

Notice what Scripture does **not** say.

It never suggests that God's presence diminished when Joseph entered government.

Quite the opposite. The God who accompanied Joseph into prison also accompanied him into the highest office in Egypt. The palace was no less holy to God than the prison cell.

Government was no less worthy of His presence than private devotion.

Indeed, it was precisely within the machinery of national government that God's wisdom preserved an entire civilisation from catastrophe.

The famine that threatened to destroy nations became the occasion through which God's servant demonstrated what righteous governance looks like.

Long before economists, development planners and ministries of finance existed, God showed the world that wisdom, foresight and faithful administration are themselves acts of love towards humanity.

Joseph's story therefore confronts us with an unavoidable question.

If God Himself raised a man into government in order to preserve nations, on what basis can we conclude that government is beneath the calling of God's people today?

The issue is not whether politics can become corrupt. It certainly can.

The issue is whether corruption should drive righteousness away.

Joseph answers with a resounding **'No!'**

Rather than abandoning the palace to corruption, God filled it with one of His servants.

Politics did not corrupt God's purpose.

God's servant transformed political leadership into an instrument of blessing.

And so Joseph becomes the first great witness in Scripture that politics, rightly understood, is a powerful tool in God's hands to bless the nations.

Politics belongs to God.



DANIEL

Faithfulness in the Service of a Pagan Empire

"…they could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent."
— Daniel 6:4b

If Joseph teaches us that God raises His servants to govern, Daniel teaches us some equally profound truths.

God does not reserve His concern for good governance for only nations that acknowledge Him. Daniel served in Babylon.

This fact deserves far more attention than it usually receives.

Babylon was not merely a foreign nation. Throughout Scripture it becomes the great symbol of human pride organised in opposition to God. It represented imperial power, idolatry, arrogance and political domination. It can't get any darker than this! Yet it was into that very empire that God deliberately sent one of His most faithful servants.

Daniel was not accidentally carried to Babylon.

He was providentially placed there. The Bible reports about the circumstances of his capture in Judah and his slavery in Babylon thus: [2] *"And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand…"* God

was not only part of the war but also the one who had determined who won the war that eventually led to Daniel finding himself as a slave in Babylon.

As a young exile he entered a foreign country, mastered its language, understood its administration and rose, through extraordinary wisdom and unimpeachable integrity, to become one of the highest officials in Babylon.

Again, we encounter something that has remained hidden in plain sight.

Daniel's ministry was exercised in Nebuchadnezzar's government.

We rightly admire his prayers. We rightly admire his courage in the lions' den. We rightly admire his unwavering devotion to the God of Israel. But every one of these magnificent moments occurred within the context of public service.

Daniel prayed as a government official.

Daniel interpreted dreams as a government official.

Daniel advised kings as a government official.

Daniel administered national affairs as a government official.

His spirituality and his statesmanship were never separated.

Indeed, they strengthened one another.

This has profound implications for the Church today.

Many believers imagine that entering politics necessarily requires compromising one's faith. Daniel demonstrates exactly the opposite.

The more he stood his ground in defence of his faith and in the midst of fierce trials and persecutions, the higher his status grew in the Babylonian kingdom.

We also find that life was not rosy in political circles then either. If politics is dirty today, it was even dirtier then, as deep conspiracies were plotted against Daniel and his three Jewish friends.

His enemies searched desperately for evidence of corruption. They examined his conduct. They scrutinised his administration and investigated his public life. Yet they reached a remarkable conclusion: they could find no dishonesty, negligence, no abuse of office nor corruption in him.

The only accusation they could successfully bring against Daniel concerned his faithfulness to God. Would that such a testimony could one day be given concerning every follower of Christ who enters government service or public life. His integrity became his most persuasive witness.

History remembers Daniel not because he accumulated power, but because he demonstrated that righteousness can flourish even within the courts of the most powerful empire on earth.

Remarkably enough, the entire script of Daniel's life including his entry into and exploits in government seemed to have been 'written' by God. And He was with Daniel at every stage of the implementation of the script. God did not keep His servant Daniel

out of the mixed up and dangerous government circles in Babylon, rather he stuck to His son all the way through with amazing results in the end!

God had not abandoned government then. He has not abandoned it now.

Politics belongs to God.



When Governing Became a Sacred Calling

"David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people."
— 2 Samuel 8:15

If Joseph teaches us that God raises His servants into government, and Daniel teaches us that God's servants can remain faithful within government, David reveals something even more profound.

He teaches us that governing itself can become a sacred calling.

This may be one of the greatest truths hidden in plain sight throughout Scripture.

When we think of David, we immediately remember the shepherd boy who faced Goliath with nothing more than a sling and an unshakable confidence in the Lord. We remember the sweet psalmist of Israel whose songs continue to strengthen the faith of God's people. We remember the worshipper who danced before the Ark of the Covenant with all his might. These memories are right and proper. Yet they tell only part of David's story. . I have written a whole book on David, but I mentioned very little about his political work as a king. I did not see it then. But I see it now and perhaps I should do a sequel called David the King! The greater part of David's life was spent neither in the pasture nor on the battlefield …..

It was spent on the throne, in government.

For approximately forty years David governed the nation of Israel. He heard disputes.He appointed leaders. He organised the kingdom. He defended its borders. He administered justice. He established institutions that would outlive his own lifetime. In other words, *David spent most of his adult life doing what we would today call the work of government.* That simple observation should cause us to pause.

If God described David as "a man after My own heart," then He was not speaking only of a shepherd or a worshipper, He was speaking of a king, or in todays language, a President or Prime Minister.

The man after God's own heart was also the man entrusted with governing God's people, which would suggest that governance must be right up there among things that are on God's heart! With David's rule then, we find God 's relationship with kings and governments coming out of the shadows into full visiblility. It's not like in Egypt or in Babylon where we can only deduce from events that God was involved, here we find it all happening in broad daylight. God actually chooses David, gets him anointed (and after a whole period of serious challenges including even near- death encounters in political circles) gets him installed as king. God choosing to thrust his dear young man into the jungle politics of Saul's reign shows us again that neither God nor his servants shun earthly thrones.

And because of this we know that:

Politics belongs to God.



ESTHER

When God Positioned One Woman to Save a Nation

"And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"
— Esther 4:14b

Unlike David's story where the hand of God is shown very clearly in the making of the king, God returns to his hideaway mode, getting busy behind the scenes in the making of Esther as Queen.

For there are moments in history when God accomplishes His purposes not through spectacular intervention, but through careful providence.

Esther's story unfolds in precisely this way.

A young Jewish woman, living far from her ancestral homeland, is unexpectedly elevated to become queen of the most powerful empire of her generation. At first glance, it appears to be little more than an extraordinary coincidence. But Scripture invites us to see something much deeper.

God was positioning His servant.

Once again we encounter a truth that has often remained hidden in plain sight.

Esther's influence did not arise from the temple. It arose from the palace. Her greatest act of obedience was not performed in a place of worship.

It was performed at the centre of political power.

When the decree was issued that threatened the destruction of the Jewish people, the crisis could not be resolved by private devotion alone. Prayer and fasting were crutial but in Esther's context they were not set up as a be all and end all. Rather, they were a support to her action plans!

There came a moment when Esther had to walk through the doors of political authority. There came a moment when Esther he had to have been in position. She was to walk through the doors of political authority. She had to stand before the king. She had to speak. She had to risk everything entrusted to her.

Prayer did not replace the responsibility for personal action.

Prayer gave her the courage to embrace it.

Mordecai's unforgettable words have echoed through the centuries:

"Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

Those words were spoken to Esther. But they continue to challenge every generation. Who knows whether God has placed a teacher in a classroom for such a time as this? Who knows whether He has placed a doctor in a hospital, a judge in the courts, an engineer in public service, a civil servant in a ministry, or a Member of Parliament in the legislature for such a time as this?

Who knows whether He still places His people wherever His purposes require them?

“If I perish, I perish.”

These are not the words of reckless ambition. They are the words of surrendered obedience. The outcome rested with God. The responsibility rested with her. That balance remains as important today as it was in the Persian Empire.

Followers of Christ do not seek positions of influence for personal glory. Nor do they shrink from responsibility when God opens the door. They accept influence as stewardship. They understand leadership as service. They recognise that every opportunity carries with it a divine responsibility.

Esther's courage preserved a nation. History is directed by the sovereign God who quietly places His servants exactly where they are needed. Sometimes in a prison, sometimes in a palace, sometimes in a parliament always according to His purpose.

And wherever God chooses to place His people, one truth remains unchanged.

Politics belongs to God.



Jesus

The Creator of Thrones

Reflecting on the nature and authority of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul writes:

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."
— Colossians 1:15–17

Five times in these three verses Paul repeats one remarkable word:

All.

All things were created by Him.

All things were created through Him.

All things were created for Him.

All things exist because of Him.

Nothing lies outside His creative purpose or sovereign authority.

Paul is careful not to leave the matter in general terms. He deliberately identifies **thrones**, **dominions**, **principalities**, and **powers**. These must surely include, at the very least, governments, kingdoms, nations, empires, and every system through which authority is exercised among men.

He made them all.

Certainly, since the Fall, many of these institutions have become corrupted. Some have been distorted by injustice, oppression, greed, and tyranny. Others have reflected God's righteous purposes only imperfectly.

Yet corruption does not cancel ownership.

Damage does not erase divine intention.

The Lord desires the redemption of political institutions just as surely as He desires the redemption of individuals, families, businesses, education, the arts, and every other sphere of human existence.

Here, then, the truth stands in the open.

When God created the universe, He did not create only the heavens, the earth, the seas, the stars, and mankind. He also ordained authority.

He established the very possibility of government.

Thrones.

Dominions.

Kingdoms.

Nations.

Empires.

These realities were not inventions conceived by Satan while God looked the other way. They originated in the wisdom and purpose of the Creator Himself.

No wonder then, that throughout the history of Scripture it is almost impossible to keep God away from thrones—or from those who sit upon them.

He speaks to kings.

He rebukes rulers.

He raises kingdoms.

He brings down empires.

He appoints leaders.

He removes them.

Again and again, He demonstrates that government has never been beyond His concern or outside His jurisdiction.

Why?

Because it has always belonged to Him.

If there is one final and decisive argument that God is interested in politics, it is this:

He made it all.

Every throne.

Every dominion.

Every authority.

Every system of rule.

All were created **through Him**.

All were created **for Him**.

The conclusion is therefore unavoidable.

The God who governed through Joseph…

Who revealed His sovereignty through Daniel…

Who established His covenant through David…

Who preserved His people through Esther…

…is the same Lord Jesus Christ through whom every throne was created and for whom every throne ultimately exists.

Firm and triumphant, the declaration thus holds:

Politics Belongs to God.

THE CHURCH'S NEW FRONTIER?

"Enlarge the place of your tent…"
— Isaiah 54:2a

Taking all these together, it becomes very clear that governance of nations is a very key area of responsibility for all the followers of Jesus Christ. God and his people have been engaged in these areas of service in times past, and it looks like he really wants this to continue today, perhaps only on a bigger scale in this present age.

So here is my plea:

A major part of God's ongoing work in the churches has been cultivating qualities of faith, courage, integrity, sacrificial service among others in his people. These valuable qualities that are being enjoyed in many church contexts are not meant for the churches alone but are intended to be used to serve the needy world in which we live. We have heard the Lord's voice and done this in the areas of education, healthcare, agriculture and more, over the centuries. The political realm, I believe, is the next frontier that the Lord is speaking to his many sons and daughters about in the present age. Just as we have served the nations in the aforementioned areas, He is now saying "….extend your service to the areas of politics and governance. I have prepared many people who are ready so go and make a start -now that you know it is a legitimate area of service for you."

HOW DO WE GET INVOLVED

We must begin to care about our nation as a starting point for caring for our nation.

BEYOND PRAYER. We have taken on the very important ministry of prayer for our nations over the years which is good and fitting because God teaches us to do so. But now we must go beyond prayer to action. One of the powerful outcomes of prayer is when it inspires specific actions that can be implemented towards the goal. So we must not stop at prayer, but rather we must expect during our prayer times, specific directions towards actions that we must take in the care of our nation.

BEYOND WHATSAPP GROUPS. For a season, this became a very useful and in some cases the only means by which we could become 'active politically'. But judging from how much is said and poured out on these platforms versus how much actually gets done in real life in the nation, I would say that these platforms stand the risk of becoming dams or even decoys from political or national action. We often assume that once we've got it out of our chest onto the platform, we've done it. But nothing can be further from the truth. I'm not sure whether anyone in a position of authority is actually listening.

Getting involved in caring for our nation.

1. **Join a political party**. I strongly recommend the Progressive Alliance for Ghana, a newly emerging political party but set to become the party of the future. Get involved in the work of organizing and mobilizing people for the future.

2. **Many skills needed**. *Administrative, IT, Design, Marketing, Communication, Finance, Accounting* etc. etc. If you have any of these skills and you wish to help move things forward voluntarily, do let the party know. You can become a great asset to the party.

3. **Consider becoming an Assemblyman/woman in your community**. This could be a great starting point for many. We would like to encourage as many people as possible to seek and contest for these positions and begin to get some training for bigger roles in the future.

4. **Consider becoming an MP.** You can become a member of parliament for your constituency. We need people with renewed minds who will see their work in the legislature as a real service to Ghana rather than an opportunity to amass wealth.

5. **Become part of PAG's shadow Cabinet**. We need people with expertise in different ministries of government to respond to major issues facing the nation with knowledge, insight and well thought out positions while we are in opposition. Always a good preparation for cabinet positions when we win.

6. **Become the next Presidential Candidate or Vice Presidential Candidate**. You can contest for the position of flagbearer of PAG in the next election cycle.

7. **Give generously towards political party work**. If it is indeed God's territory for service, then the same principles that govern giving and receiving in God's kingdom do apply

there too. Better and ethically stronger political movements can be raised up from large numbers of people contributing what they can than from a few people bankrolling the party.

8. **Nation Care Ministries**. Just as we have Marriage Ministries, Healing Ministries, Medical Missions and Kingdom Business Movements, we should now add Nation Care Ministries to give a focus to teaching one another about our responsibilities in the realm of politics and governance in our nations. This will connect the rich resources of God among His people to the nations in which we live which are often in very great need of things we may have in abundance.

   "I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing to the nations".

   Gen 12:2b

Perhaps one day, when the history of this generation is written, it will not be said merely that the Church prayed for nations.

It will be said that the Church helped shape them.

It will not be said that Christians only complained about corruption.

It will be said that they lived with such integrity that corruption retreated before them.

It will not be said merely that believers stood outside the gates of influence.

It will be said that they entered those gates as servants of Christ and transformed them with truth, justice, humility, and love.

And when that day comes, the world may finally understand what heaven has always known:

Politics was never abandoned by God.

It has always belonged to Him.

I am concluding my message to you with an appeal to all men and women, young and old of good heart, from the north, south, east and west of the country, men and women of faith, hope, love and integrity, who care enough about Ghana and believe Ghana can be changed, to rise up and join us so that together we can create this new nation of Ghana.

Dr John Kpikpi

Presidential Candidate,

The Progressive Alliance For Ghana.

Communications: Donald. + 233 247457364
Website: joinpag.org

tiktok: @progressive.allia55

Facebook: Progressive Alliance for Ghana

youtube: @progressivealliancepartypag.

X: @Progressiv89528





Apostle Dr John Enyonam Kwaku Kpikpi,
B.Sc.(GH) D.Phil. (Sussex)