



*Christian Political Witness*

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## What should Christian political engagement look like today?

Seventeen hundred years after the Edict of Milan (when Constantine legalized Christianity), Christians continue to wrestle with the relation between church and state.

- What might a distinctively Christian witness mean in an increasingly polarized climate where the immensity of the challenges governments face seems matched only by the partisanship of the political system?
- What is the proper Christian response to unending wars, burgeoning debt, disregard for civil liberties, attacks on the sanctity of life, and economic injustice, not to mention ongoing challenges to traditional understandings of sexuality and marriage?
- Are Christians anything more than an interest group, open to manipulation by those who most enticingly promise to preserve a certain way of life?
- And how will Christians respond to their increasingly marginalized status in the West, where Christendom is at least on the wane, if not, as some have suggested, proceeding to its slow and final death?

The twenty-second Wheaton Theology Conference, held on the campus of Wheaton College in April 2013, furnished an opportunity to consider these questions afresh. Despite the variety of perspectives and approaches the presenters contributed, one may note in these essays a certain commonality of theme: Christians must remind themselves that the primary locus of Christian political activity is the church. We do not finally put our trust in military power, economic might or even the wisdom of founding fathers. Our faith is ultimately in Jesus Christ and his love for the community he founded. The shape of our corporate life should therefore reflect above all else fidelity to him, and not just identity politics or pragmatic concerns.

– Adapted from the Introduction by George Kalantzis and Gregory W. Lee