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What Would a Biblical America Be Like?
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In many recent moral debates in the United States, we have heard people calling for a return to a more biblical America. With regard to many difficult issues such as gay rights, abortion, and marriage, some argue that our society should simply "do what the Bible says."

One problem with a call for return to biblical principles on these matters is that the Bible does not speak directly about these questions. Scripture never even imagines the possibility of abortion, for example, although its passages about killing can form the basis for different theological positions about it.

There are many topics on which the Bible is quite explicit, however, and if we wanted to create a biblical America, there are ample guidelines available. What would a biblical America be like? Let us imagine:

- **Political system:** The only political system in Scripture is that of a king or an emperor. For Scripture, the only question is whether the king is native to the country or an outsider who conquered the country. In the case of the latter, Jesus did not counsel rebellion, but to "turn the other cheek," and to "pay unto Caesar what is Caesar's" (i.e., taxes) without complaint. The idea that people should elect their rulers is not even imagined.
- **Economic system:** The Bible clearly forbids charging interest when loaning money. Since interest-based financing is one of the driving forces of a capitalist economy, we would need to scrap the very economic system that has generated this country's wealth. No loaning on interest would also prevent borrowing money for a mortgage. To buy a home, you would have to save up the entire purchase price.
- **Slavery:** Neither the New Testament nor the Old see anything wrong with slavery. Indeed, the apostle Paul counsels his enslaved readers to accept their slavery as God's will. This is not race-based slavery, but a system in which any one can become a slave, either through poverty or military defeat. There is even a temporary

form of slavery for the poor. In debt? Can't pay your bills? Sell yourself (or your children) into slavery for seven years.

- **Women:** A woman's place is in the home, not the workplace. Women should not play any role in public society. They should not have jobs outside the home, nor should they speak in church, let alone teach Sunday school or become ministers. Men would have to fill all the jobs that women now occupy. Children would stay home under their mothers' care -- no more daycare. Since women would never function outside the home, there would be no need to educate them.
- **Sons:** A son's duty is to obey and respect his father and mother. If he doesn't, he should be punished by death.
- **Clothing styles:** Cross-dressing is out. Neither men nor women can wear clothing designed for the opposite sex. Only men can wear the pants in the family.
- **Worship:** Religion, including its theology and beliefs, would be closely linked to the national government. Under the kings of Israel, there was one official religion. It was supported not only by a central priesthood, but also by the power of the king and his army. When Israel was controlled by foreign powers, that centralized religion became the expression of national identity, and rampant nationalism replaced government as the driving force of conformity. In this biblical America, then, there would be one religion (Episcopal? Catholic? Baptist?), and no freedom of religion.

So what do you think? Should we remake American society more in line with biblical principles?