

Christian Engagement in the Public Arena, EEA's Code of Conduct

This code summarises the points in the European Evangelical Alliance's new Socio-Political Approach. This longer document gives a biblical rationale for how we believe Christians should conduct themselves in the public arena. The Approach & Code were formally approved by EEA in June 2011. Both will be available shortly in several languages at www.europeanea.org/news.html

Knowing we are called to be Christ's ambassadors in all of life, being so aware of our inadequacy, and motivated only by a desire to glorify the King of Kings, we ask the Lord to help us engage in the following ways and recommend these guidelines to all Christians involved in the public arena.

Love

- We will speak and act with grace, gentleness and mercy to all.
- We will seek to build genuine relationships with all in the public arena, including with those who disagree with us.
- We will especially love those that society marginalises, care deeply for them and dare to challenge the injustices that oppress.

Humility

- We will pray at all times, knowing that only the Lord can bring about change.
- Knowing that having or being near power can be corrupting, we remember our dependency on the Lord and draw close to Him through prayer.
- It is so easy to react to trouble with foolishness or anger. But we dare not dishonour Christ so we cling to Him in our weakness and ask Him to gently correct us.
- We will be accountable to a politically diverse group of friends who will help us remain faithful to our calling.
- We will adopt an attitude of service towards both the weak and the strong.

Truth

- We will speak and act with truth and integrity at all times.
- Our political ideas and actions must be based on all of Scripture. We must not use the Bible to confirm our pre-formed ideas. Rather, we will study with Christians of different political philosophies to ensure that our ideas are truly biblical. We will work to ensure we reflect the breadth of God's concerns, not just focusing on one of two issues.
- There are so many distortions of truth in politics and media's portrayal of it. We will do everything we can to seek the truth by careful monitoring and analysis and to advocate strongly for the truth.

Peace

- Disagreement and confrontation are inevitable but we will disagree with grace.
- As peacemakers, we will build bridges wherever possible. We seek to persuade, not argue.

Courage

- In some countries, engagement can lead to real danger. When trouble comes, we pray God will give us both courage and wisdom to know what He is asking of us. We will always stand with brothers and sisters in danger and ask them to tell us how we can assist.
- Elsewhere, trouble may come in the form of criticism, misrepresentation or legal challenge. Again, we will ask the Lord for courage and wisdom so that we honour Him in our response. We will help one another in times of difficulty.
- Our first priority must always be faithfulness to Christ. We pray for the courage to hold on to this.

Wisdom

- Politicians do not have to listen to us. Rather, by building good relationships and providing excellent, relevant and wise ideas and information, presented professionally, we trust that some will wish to listen.
- Where possible, Christians should join different political parties. No party, not even a "Christian" one, is perfect, all need salt and light. As Evangelical Alliance, however, we must steer clear of party allegiance as much as possible. The Gospel is for all, we cannot give the impression that the Lord prefers those of a particular party.
- We encourage pastors to play their vital role of supporting and discipling their congregations as they engage in society and in urging prayer for the public arena and biblical reflection on issues.

Hope

- Our hope of change is based on God. He can enable salt and light to make a difference.
- With joy, we wait for Christ's return and the full establishment of His wonderful Kingdom.
- Meanwhile, we will live in and share the joy of this hope. The hope of the Gospel brings light to the darkest situation.