

Attitudes Toward Power: Boromir vs. Gandalf

Written by surgingchaos.

Boromir

“True-hearted Men, they will not be corrupted. We of Minas Tirith have been staunch through long years of trial. We do not desire the power of wizard-lords, only strength to defend ourselves, strength in a just cause. And behold! In our need chance brings to light the Ring of Power. It is a gift, I say; a gift to the foes of Mordor. It is mad not to use it, to use the power of the Enemy against him. The fearless, the ruthless, these alone will achieve victory. What could not a warrior do in this hour, a great leader? What could not Aragorn do? Or if he refuses, why not Boromir? The Ring would give me power of Command. How I would drive the hosts of Mordor, and all men would flock to my banner!”

Boromir is the modern day conservative. He clearly sees One Ring as dangerous, but something that needs to be wielded in the correct hands, by someone who isn't corrupt. Conservatives think of the analogue to One Ring (“big government”) in exactly the same way. Big government is dangerous. We can see what happens when wizard-lord Democrats have control of it. But it's not really a big issue to them because they believe they can control the government when it's in their hands. Their belief is that someone who is not corrupt can successfully wield the power of government and use it not just for good and self-defense, but for vanquishing our “enemies”. Just replace the enemies of Mordor with some other boogeyman, and the comparison becomes astonishingly similar.

Gandalf

“With that power I should have power too great and terrible. And over me the Ring would gain a power still greater and more deadly... Do not tempt me! For I do not wish to become like the Dark Lord himself. Yet the way of the Ring to my heart is by pity, pity for weakness and the desire of strength to do good. Do not tempt me! I dare not take it,

not even to keep it safe, unused. The wish to wield it would be too great for my strength. I shall have such need of it. Great perils lie before me."

Gandalf is the modern day libertarian. Just like how Gandalf views One Ring as being completely dangerous and believes he should be nowhere near it, libertarians believe the same thing about government. It's also why libertarians (both big and small L) have such a hard time getting influence in politics. The whole philosophy of libertarianism is hardwired as such that the whole point is to keep "the ring" away from everyone. But how can you do that if you don't want to play the game? It's a conundrum that has split libertarians to this day.

Given the results of this election, we now have a legion of Boromirs taking office and with full control of everything. They were sick and tired of seeing the wizard-lords control the Ring, and now it's their turn to get the Ring for themselves. Many people on this subreddit see that as a good thing because they despise the wizard-lords so much, but I digress. Throw that shit into Mount Doom.