

Basic Understanding of Government

Introduction

When you begin to speak of government, you have to include areas, which have, in our society, become dirty words—authority, submission, structure, rules, laws, and regulations. The purpose of any government is to bring structure and order to the daily lives and issues of society. Governments do this by imposing laws, rules, and regulations and specifying a legal process to punish those who disregard those laws or otherwise provide equitable redress to those who have been wronged by others. This is as true of the government of God, i.e., the Kingdom of God, as it is for any secular government.

However, the Church in America has hindered our understanding of God’s government by emphasizing an extreme grace that implies that we are without law. It is true that we are under grace in the New Testament dispensation and we are not under the Law. But that means we are no longer dependent upon the Old Testament Law for righteousness. Our righteousness has been provided by grace through Jesus Christ who fulfilled all of the requirements of the Law of Moses. That does not mean that we are without law. It does not mean that we can do whatever we want whenever we want without considering God’s requirements under the new covenant.

One who is without law is “lawless”, which is one of our definitions of an “outlaw”. The New Testament has a lot to say about lawlessness and it is condemned by the Lord. The King James translation of the Scriptures frequently translates the Greek word for lawlessness as “iniquity”. The New American Standard Bible translates it correctly as “lawlessness”. Jesus gives us His view of this:

Mat 7:21-23 NASB

- (21) "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*."
- (22) "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'"
- (23) "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'"

You can’t be a one who is lawless (even doing good works in the name of Jesus) and enter into the government of God. Obedience to the will of the Father is a requirement. It is His will that structures our behavior. He does this by giving us His commands to which we are to become obedient.

The government of God is the Kingdom of God where Jesus rules as both Lord and King. The Kingdom is in mystical or spiritual form now; but, it will be in physical form during the literal

1000 year reign of Christ on earth at His second coming. His government re-establishes the throne of David as prophesied.

Isa 9:6-7 NASB

- (6) For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
- (7) There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

His government brings peace and is ordered and established with judgment and with justice. This is the standard for which all earthly government must strive.

Created to rule

When God created man, He created him to rule, to have dominion and authority¹. This desire is built into us. We want to rule in whatever circumstances that we find ourselves. Of course, it was God's intention that man rule under the dominion and authority of Himself. When Adam was disobedient, he was cut off from the life and authority of the Lord. Man did not lose the desire to rule; however, he no longer had the ability to accomplish this through God but instead sought to rule from his own authority and that which was provided by the Enemy.

The authority of our world system is derived from the pattern established by Lucifer². It is based on pride and on ascending to as high a position as possible by taking what you want. It is built upon dissatisfaction with who you are, where you are, and what you are doing. Anyone who has ever been in the corporate world immediately recognizes the process of climbing the corporate ladder to reach the top. This is a hierarchical structure of government shaped like a triangle with the highest point being the top person. This is not the pattern of the Kingdom of God.

The governmental pattern of the world system is not the governmental pattern of Jesus.

Mat 20:25-28 NASB

- (25) But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "**You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and *their* great men exercise authority over them.**
- (26) "**It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,**
- (27) **and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;**
- (28) **just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

1 Genesis 1:26-28

2 Isaiah 14:12-14

Jesus tells us directly that the government, the exercise of dominion or authority, among His people is not to be like that of the world system. His government is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost³ administered through service to one another. It is based on *receiving* rather than *taking*.

We learn to rule by yielding to the Lordship of Christ and ministering to one another. This is directly opposite to the methodology of Lucifer.

I have said all of this about government and ruling to establish the fact that the way of the Lord is different. Our way of thinking has created major problems among the people of God because we have brought the structure of government of the world system into the Church. In secular thinking we have “positions or offices” in government. In spiritual thinking we have “functions of ministry” in the Kingdom of God. This is as different as night is from day.

The practical outworking of this is exemplified by the practice of authority. In secular government you “have authority” because you can command obedience from your position. In the Kingdom you can exercise authority because you are “under authority”. In secular government you can “make” people do things that they do not want to do. In the Kingdom, even God does not “make” people do things but instead entreats people through love and service to do the right thing.

In the secular realm, authority is equated with power and the right to command others. In the spiritual realm, authority is equated with responsibility and the right to serve others. We have been given authority over demons and demonic powers, authority to fulfill the plan and call of God; but we have not been given authority over people. God does not transgress the free will of people and He will not allow anyone else to do it either. People must voluntarily submit their will to His government.

The moment that we begin to control people is the moment we begin to operate under the principle of Satan, that is, to dominate, intimidate, and force others into doing our will. The power of this principle is called witchcraft in the Scriptures and it can be either demonic or fleshly⁴. When the built in desire to rule is manifested as controlling others we are operating in one of the works of the flesh, i.e., witchcraft. This fleshly work can also be demonically empowered. When cult leaders seem to exercise a supernatural control over their followers, they are frequently under the influence of demonically empowered witchcraft.

The sad news is that too many in the Church are blind to the influence of witchcraft. It is rampant in many of the assemblies of God’s people. It masquerades as prayer needs for those we don’t believe to be doing God’s will; as laws for holiness or acceptance; as manipulations of leadership or others through money, praise, pride, or power.

The even sadder news is that witchcraft is most prevalent in the abuses of authority in leadership. Any leader who intimates that to disagree with him is to disagree with God is in danger of utilizing witchcraft. Any leader that implies leaving his group will result in God’s judgment is in

3 Romans 14:17

4 Galatians 5:19-21

danger of utilizing witchcraft. Anyone who takes up an offering in such a way as to apply guilt or manipulate people into giving is in danger of utilizing witchcraft. We can add a number of other things to this list, but the bottom line is that any effort to control or manipulate people into doing what we want instead of what God wants is witchcraft.

Witchcraft is a counterfeit of the Enemy for governmental control. It is his tool of manipulation, intimidation and control to cause people to do his bidding and fulfill his desires. When we try to utilize the methods of the world system as our form of government, we open ourselves to government by and through witchcraft. This has major impact on us if our form of church government is worldly rather than Kingdom structured.