



Governing Humanity

Articles on Politics & God

At Christ's Table ~ ACTpublications

"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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W.D. Furiioso, Writer ~ Frances Furiioso, Editor

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Preface

Governing Humanity is a collection of previously published articles investigating various aspects of the subject of Governance. The articles deal with the essential differences between the nature and character of the governance of the Creator God over and against the self-governance of Fallen Humanity. “The Way of God & The Way of Humanity” discusses the differences in approach between theology and politics in addressing societal needs. “IN the World, But Not OF the World” seeks a biblically moral response to the fallenness of the World and its politics. “How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity?” offers a possible political philosophy which may coincide with a biblical worldview of politics. “The Root Problem with “Progressive Christianity” gives a brief history of the movement, identifying its fundamental doctrinal and theological error. “Globalism & God” briefly surveys Scripture for God’s response to the various globalization attempts of Humanity in biblical history. “Do Not Be Entangled” is an exegesis of an apostolic exhortation regarding the Christian’s response to political issues and events in the World.



The Way of God & The Way of Humanity

The Difference Between Theology & Politics:

The Kingdom of the Lord & His Christ & The kingdoms of this World

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Preface

While I've never heard it said, I think it is true to say that we are most interested in what we have faith in. The central object of our faith is that which tends to be our "life source" of continued sustenance in life. **We serve our source.** For this reason, I had been quite disinterested in politics for most of my adult life. This is because I have absolutely no faith in politics. Yet, more recently, I found myself becoming interested in both global and national politics. I explained this by telling myself I have a natural concern for the future of my children and grandchildren. But I suppose we may also have a certain level of interest in that which we perceive as *hostile* to our lives, as well as that which *sustains* our lives. However, I believe my increased interest in politics has primarily come about because I have been seeking the Holy Spirit to equip me to be able to clearly and accurately communicate a truly biblical view of politics. I hope I accomplish that in some measure through this article. If I were to end up merely expressing another human opinion, I would not consider it worth all the time and effort which this writing required of me; and I would agree, if you decided it was

not worth the time and effort required of you to read it.

"But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed; therefore, I spoke," I also believe, therefore I also speak." (2 Corinthians 4:13)

What I have to offer is at variance with the current conventional "Evangelical" perspectives and political activities.¹ I've been concerned about this for more than 40 years – namely, that the current conventional **"Evangelical" perspective of the Kingdom of God is askew**, and the seeming majority of American Christians are unfortunately "showing their faith by their works". (James 2:18) What I mean is this: **Their political fervor reveals what is truly the central object of their faith, that which they believe in, trust in, depend upon, lean upon – and that is specifically, political influence and power, rather than the influence and power of the Spirit of God. This fits in with secular materialism but is out of place with biblical Christianity.**

I believe that the essential issue involves truly

¹ It equally flies in the face of the disposition of most "Progressive Christians", as well as most non-Christians.

"seeing", "entering" and "living" in the Kingdom of God. (John 3:3-5) So, for those 40 years, I taught and wrote on the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. And while I think it best to overcome error with truth rather than merely criticizing the error, I've now felt the need to address with more clarity that which is wrong with the current conventional "Evangelical" perspective and political activities.

These past few years, I've been aware of being led by the Holy Spirit into the study of a number of biblical categories which, at least for me, have been connected with one another, and have all seemed to culminate under the headings of **"the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ"** and **"the kingdoms of this world"**.

(Revelation 11:15) **Theology speaks of the being and doing of God. Politics speaks of the being and doing of Humanity.** Both politicized theology and theologized politics deal with unrealities. The religio-political voice of a Constantinian Civil Religion which attempts to speak both ways at once, ends up being incoherent, and is

neither good theology nor good politics.² As Jacques Ellul has said: *"Giving Christian responses or solutions [to political problems] would be absurd. How can we propose solutions derived from our faith to people who live outside the faith"*³ I hope I have avoided being guilty of this, as I believe my perspectives on the difference between theology and politics are based on the essential difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world.

² Cf. The writings of Karl Barth & Vernard Eller

³ *The False Presence of the Kingdom*, New York: Seabury Press, 1972, page 125

Introduction

In recent years, we have been in a peculiar and significant season in the USA, and indeed, throughout the whole world. With mass media and social media flooding the air with secular views of politics, I believe Christians have an excellent opportunity via the Internet "to preach the gospel of the kingdom as a witness" (Matthew 24:14) and to communicate a biblical worldview as an alternative response – both to non-believers and believers as well.⁴

By way of introduction, I'll share here some social media correspondence between myself and a very close friend of 60 years. Following is a meme he posted and my comments in response.

⁴ "There are now 5.24 billion active social media users around the world." (February 2025) <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-sub-section-state-of-social>



My Initial Response to the Meme

"Jesus did feed the hungry and heal the sick. But nowhere in the Gospels do we see Him advocating governmental programs for feeding the hungry and healing the sick."

My Friend's Response

"Neither did Jesus advocate building roads, funding schools, funding police and fire departments for public safety, passing of laws to end slavery, child labor or discrimination, creating a reliable income source (Social Security) to provide financial support and dignity for older citizens, an affordable health care system (Medicare) for older citizens whose needs for health care are the greatest at a time they can least afford it, a system of health care (Medicaid and The Affordable Care

Act) for those who cannot afford it, food stamps for those who cannot afford to buy food, and a strong military for national security. Jesus, since Biblical times, has not been among us to have done any of these things, so it has been left to humans, as flawed as we are, to work for the betterment of our societies and our world. We can 'heal the sick and feed the poor' ... in the same spirit of love and concern for God's creation as Jesus lived His life ... or we can choose not to. My issue with the GOP is that while they actively ally themselves with Christian voters, they either oppose or reduce funding for programs which help those who need it the most."

My Additional Comments

"What the GOP does is one thing, but what Christians do is another thing. The fact is: Not all those who call themselves "Christians" are Republican, some are Democrats, and some are neither. Religious profiling is useful only to political campaign managers. It is true - Jesus hasn't been on the earth for a few thousand years. But it doesn't follow that He is doing nothing in the human realm. He said: "Blessed are those who do not see yet believe." (John 20:29) Those who do not believe don't "see" the work of God (Cf. John 6:29); and consequently, they have no other option than to try to get their needs met by human beings independent of God. Human history shows that this is not working out very well. While it is true that Jesus hasn't been on earth for a few thousand years, and He is definitely not engaged in all of the

*governmental programs mentioned whether they be Democratic or Republican policy programs, it doesn't follow that He is not engaged in human affairs. Nor does it follow that He does not want His followers to be engaged in human affairs. **The issue is the WAY of involvement.**"*

"Involvement"

Informed

What do I mean by the term "involvement"? Obviously, there are various levels and modes of involvement in politics. **Firstly, "involvement" is to be informed.** We live in a "global village". To be informed of political proceedings only on a local level, or only on a regional level, or only on a national level is not only to be uninformed – it is to be ill-informed with a skewed perspective. **I don't believe one can accurately understand political proceedings without putting things in a global context.** Some news media do a better job than others. But whether we are speaking of the humdrum of syndicated news or the “non-bias” claims of "independent" reporting, we find that some sources tend to only report on certain things and other sources tend to not report on certain things. *All* news media publish with "a slant and a spin" – *all* – Progressive, Conservative, "Independent", "Christian" - *all*. This needs to be taken into consideration, as one avails himself to a broad-spectrum of news sources.

And obviously, all of what is published on social media needs to be vetted, yet deserves consideration, if for nothing other than getting an assessment of the populace – after all, politics is about the populace as well as the polis. I consider myself well-informed, but quite short of punditry.

Voting

Next, is involvement via voting. Most – believers and non-believers alike – assess voting as a demonstration of responsible citizenship. The majority consensus of voters and non-voters alike is that to not vote is acting irresponsibly and results in the loss of one's right to express an opinion on things political. Personally, I don't have a problem with people voting if it makes them feel good and they believe it is helpful. But, when one considers, corporate funding of campaigns⁵, the limitations of a two-party system, the bizarre delegate vote system, et. al., I think the reality of "the power of the vote" is questionable, and the "importance of voting"

⁵ Cf. The Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*

is quite over-rated. For many Christians, voting is seen as the fulfillment of their godly duty regarding politics. In my perspective, it doesn't even scratch the surface of fulfilling their godly duty; and instead, is an easy-believe-ism alternative to authentically living as a disciple of Christ and being a distinct witness of the King and His Kingdom. Romans 13:1-3 tells us to "submit" to or "obey" the government, but there is no reference to voting in this passage. Voting is not a law that must be obeyed. There is a reference to the apostle Paul exercising his right as a Roman citizen when under arrest⁶ in order to help him fulfill his divine call to address Caesar in Rome.⁷ But there is no reference to him ever exercising a Roman citizen's right to vote or run for political office. It should go without saying that voting is not a biblical injunction. I don't believe voting is the only way, or even the most effective way of political involvement. Publishing perspectives on social media wields much more influence and power for change than voting. Why not do both? I suppose you can. Personally, I have never

⁶ Acts 22:23-29; 25:10-11

⁷ Acts 19:21; 20:22; 23:11

voted simply because I have absolutely no faith in the exercise.⁸

Public Service

Next, there is direct involvement by serving a political party, campaign and/or running for political office. My perspective: This, in and of itself, is not sinful. But it is very often conducted in sinful ways, as much of what goes on in the political arena is sinful. It *seems like* that wasn't the case in years gone by, but it probably was then also, even with politicians who *seemed to* have more wholesome characters. I think God would have witnesses in the political arena, as He would in every arena of human endeavor. Just as being a Christian naturally influences all of our perceptions, values, choices, and actions in life in this world (including voting), being a Christian in political office should also naturally affect how one conducts himself in that office. Some occupations *seem* less challenging to Christians

⁸ I have addressed the issue of “voting” in much more detail in another article entitled, [“In the World, But Not OF the World: A Personal Investigation into the Morality of Voting”](https://www.AtChristsTable.org).

than being a politician. But again, that is not really the case. We have seen that, even if one is both a baker and a Christian, it can result in personal threats from certain people groups and the ruin to your business because of government legislation. The situation was similar for Christian artisans and guilds in the first century.

We should not assume that political propositions coming from the Conservative Right are always biblically based. We also should understand that there are some Progressives on the Left who claim to be interested in Christian morality. But the only authentic "Christian stance" on something is a stance which is simply and clearly stated in the New Testament scriptures – not human morality judgments or political propositions coming from either the Progressive Left or the Conservative Right.

Specifically, to Christians, I would like to say that when it comes to whether or not to bake a cake for a Gay wedding, or whether or not to increase nuclear

armaments for national defense, the current conventional Evangelical-Conservative Right stance may or may not be "the good and right thing to do". Human beings may have decided to "be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:22), but that doesn't mean they can do it as well as God can – far from it! Like human laws, human political decisions will *never* sufficiently address the human condition. Since only "the law of the Lord is perfect" (Psalm 19:7), and since only "His works are perfect because all His ways are just" (Deuteronomy 32:4), the "good and right thing to do" for humans, more often than we would like, may fall under the principles of conscience Paul discusses in Romans 14.

The Way of Politics & The Way of God

At this point, I will repeat the premise I stated at the beginning of this article: **The current conventional "Evangelical" perspective of the Kingdom of God is askew**, and the seeming majority of American Christians are unfortunately "showing their faith by their works". (James 2:18) What I mean is this: **Their political fervor reveals what is truly the central object of their faith, that which they believe in, trust in, depend upon, lean upon – and that is specifically, political influence and power, rather than the influence and power of the Spirit of God.** This fits in with secular materialism but is out of place with biblical Christianity. **I believe that the essential issue involves truly "seeing", "entering" and "living" in the Kingdom of God.** (John 3:3-5)

The way of these “Evangelical” Christians, as well as the way of “Progressive” Christians, and the way of “Nominal” Christians, as well as the way of all non-Christians is this: **The pursuit of human politics based**

on the faulty assumption that human beings can and should govern themselves independent of God. Now, those who identify as Christians, purport to engage in politics *with God* according to biblical principles. But, as I just stated, because of a faulty understanding of the nature of the Kingdom of God, the central object of their faith, that which they believe in, trust in, depend upon, lean upon is political influence and power, rather than the influence and power of the Spirit of God. Quite simply, the object of their faith is political influence and power, rather than the influence and power of the Spirit of God.

All human beings have a free will, and the vast majority of human beings have chosen this **political option**. Unfortunately, throughout human history, the majority has never proven to have a corner on truth. The way of human "politics" is not only a faulty assumption - it is also a poor choice. Not only is "politics" a poor way of addressing human needs, but it is also *contrary to the way Jesus intends for human needs to be addressed*.

His way is predicated upon faith⁹ - believing in, trusting in, depending upon, leaning upon God, rather than human beings and human effort. Christ's teachings, as well as the whole of the Bible, all indicate God's way of humans addressing human needs. And this "way" begins with Jesus - who called Himself "The Way, the Truth and the Life". (John 14:6)

The biblical "way", which has been by and large rejected or abandoned, is living according to divine principles - not human legislations, but divine principles - which are intended to govern individuals, marriages, families, and local communities with regards to addressing human needs. With the rejection of God and His ways, these spheres break down, and consequently, the built-in support system for the human community also disintegrates.

I am quite aware that to non-Christians, as well as many Christians, the argument I am making probably seems to be nihilistic, and irresponsible with regards to the human condition in this present age. It probably

⁹ (Greek) *pistis*, Strong's # 4102

seems like I'm "hiding behind my religion", thinking "pie in the sky", saying "*nothing can be done*", and therefore choosing to just not get involved with the problems of Humanity. I don't believe that is truly the case.

I know that many non-Christians are quite sincere in their appeal: "*It has been left to humans, as flawed as we are, to work for the betterment of our societies and our world.*" I agree:

- Human beings have needs.
- Human beings are flawed.

What I don't agree with is this:

- Human beings addressing human needs independent of God.
- Addressing human needs via "politics" – human effort.

The majority of the world's population believes that we do not need God and His ways to address human needs. Humanity believes it is capable of addressing human needs through political action. There is even talk of "eliminating" certain human problems like poverty.

(This is in direct contradiction to Christ's words: Matthew 26:11, Mark 14:7, John 12:8) I do not believe that the scriptures indicate it is God's intention to eliminate Humanity's problems in this age – in the age to come, yes, but not in this age.¹⁰

Regarding my non-believing friends' appeals to our responsibility for meeting human needs: Personally, I only have faith in God's ways. I am quite aware that the majority of the earth's population does not believe in the God of the Bible and therefore rejects the biblical ways of dealing with human needs. And I understand that human beings, flawed as they are, will do what they think is the best way to meet their own needs. This is the activity of "politics". Again, our faith - what we believe in, trust in, depend upon, lean upon – is revealed by what we do. And I believe this is the essence of the matter regarding "politics": **Political involvement is motivated by faith in politics – that is, faith in human effort.**

¹⁰ Detailed explanations for why I make such a statement can be found in other articles like "[How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity](#)" and "[IN the World, But Not OF the World](#)".

When we use the word "politics" (and I guess we cannot avoid using it, so we should define what we mean when we do use it), we usually mean *the propagation of and involvement in governmental programs being applied to address human needs for "betterment of our society and world"*. With sincere appeals like "We can 'heal the sick and feed the poor' ... in the same spirit of love and concern for God's creation as Jesus lived His life", the intention is that we can do this through the implementation of governmental programs – that is, through "politics". The assumption is that this is the **ONLY** way to address human need. Whereas, in reality, it is a choice which rejects God's way of addressing human need.

In the biblical way, human needs are addressed by the grace of God, yet the responsibility for provision is placed on the individual rather than on the government. It truly takes a number of additional articles to delineate the biblical injunctions and their applications; but suffice for here to just mention a few scripture passages for reflection:

Proverbs 19:17 “Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.”

Matthew 25:35-40 “For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger, and you welcomed me, I was naked, and you clothed me, I was sick, and you visited me, I was in prison, and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”

Philippians 2:4 “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Hebrews 13:16 “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

James 1:27 “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

1 John 3:17 “But if anyone has the world’s goods and

sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"

1 Timothy 5:3-4, 8 "Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.... Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

To these biblical references I would add a suggestion by Jacques Ellul to reflect upon regarding an approach to meeting human needs: "*Think globally, act locally.*"¹¹ What would be the global effect, if every individual saw to the needs of his family, friends, and neighbors on the local level (in some cases, through a measure of local organization) instead of looking to a federal or state government for provision, policies, and programs?

None of the above biblical injunctions require a

¹¹ Cf. "*Perspectives on Our Age*", by Jacques Ellul, Seabury Press, 1981.

governmental program. In fact, the Bible basically defines the role of human government as being simply and only protection and **punishment**, *but not provision*. (Romans 13:1-3)¹²

These are some of the ways of God – the ways of the Kingdom of God. In this government, the "federal headquarters" is not located on the earth. The only real citizenship followers of Jesus claim is a "citizenship of heaven" (Philippians 3:20). All other citizenships have been required by human beings, imposed by human beings, awarded by human beings, and desired by human beings.

While by and large they have presently abdicated their responsibility and given it over to the politics of human governments, there have been a few times in human history when the followers of Christ have lived out their witness to this heavenly kingdom - *quite without the help of human politics*. Feeding and clothing the poor,

¹² There are particular "national" issues, such as national defense, which all within the God-ordained purpose of government – that is, to protect the populace. But government should never function in such a way that over-rides the freedoms and rights of the individual.

education, health care, and other issues used to be primarily the responsibility of the Church.¹³ But since **the Church has abdicated its responsibility**, this witness has been severely weakened.

Can God's way – the biblical way – actually be implemented in a world of predominantly non-believers? As Jesus said, "You *must* be born of the Spirit to see and enter the Kingdom of God." This requires allowing God to change your heart, mind, and life; and unfortunately, the vast majority of human beings still choose to not allow this.¹⁴

¹³ Again, this is most effective with decisions being made on the local church level rather than a national or international "denominational" level, even though local churches can organize to work together in meeting these needs.

¹⁴ Every human being has had or will have the opportunity to make this choice. To say that every human being does not have this choice because of culture, race, education, disadvantage, etc. is merely being intellectually dishonest.

Some Personal Observations

All human beings exercise faith - either in God or in Humanity. By definition, "faith" is believing in, trusting in, depending upon, leaning upon – either God or Humanity. As James has pointed out (2:18), we demonstrate our faith through our works – we apply ourselves to what we have "faith" in – either God or Humanity – following either biblical theology and its life applications or political philosophies, parties, policies, and programs. **We serve our source.** Rebellion against a particular religion or espousing freedom from all forms of religion (which is currently enjoying wide-spread popularity) is evidence of faith in Humanity. Even revolution to overthrow a particular government or espousing freedom from all forms of government still results in faith in Humanity to govern itself.

The "majority view" holds that it is the "responsibility" of every citizen (and presently, even of non-citizens) to participate in the political process by voting. This "majority view" is available to *all* in a "democratic"

society. In contrast to this is the "minority view" of living as a disciple of the King and His Kingdom. This is a "minority view" because it is contingent upon being "born of the Spirit" and living by faith in the grace of God. The majority of the earth's population is not "born of the Spirit" and not interested in receiving the grace of God. Therefore, it is truly absurd to think that general Humanity would even seriously consider biblical theology as a viable approach to addressing the human condition with its problems and needs. The fact is, to expect those who are not "born of the Spirit" to live out biblical theology is advocating an impossibility as a political solution.¹⁵ If "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6), then without that same kind of faith it is also impossible to live out a biblical theology. **The "Christian Right", or the current conventional Evangelical voice – proposes an absurd Constantinian Civil Religion which is a false representation of, and worse, a false substitute for, the Kingdom of God.**

¹⁵ Again, Jacques Ellul suggests: "Giving Christian responses or solutions [to political problems] would be absurd."

Contrary to the popular accusation that Christians who speak out and live out their faith in public are "imposing" their religion on others¹⁶, the reality is that all human beings are absolutely free as to their choice of what they believe and how they live. No one – including Christians – should demand otherwise of anyone. If and when a human government *legislates* and *enforces* a particular perspective and practice of life, that government has transgressed its God-given purpose, which is to *protect* human life and freedom and *punish* evil doers. (Romans 13:1-3) This passage does not say that God also ordained human governments to *provide* for human beings. As Creator, He is the Giver, the Sustainer, and the Perfector of all life. He has and will continue to *provide* for His human beings; and He will do it His way. If and when a human government *legislates* and *enforces* a particular perspective and practice of *provision* of human needs, that government has gone beyond the realm of its God-given purpose.

¹⁶ However, in the case of authentic Islam, it is true that the Quran requires its adherents to impose their faith on every human being, insisting on exact adherence under threat of punishment and death.

Some Personal Conclusions

Believers in Humanity and politics have an incredibly difficult task – actually, it is an impossible task. But I cannot criticize any such efforts. I don't think I have or even profess to have "better" political solutions. And I try to avoid offering "religious" solutions to those who insist on "secular" solutions. Yet, like any normal human being, I care about the well-being of myself and my loved ones. I can also honestly say that I sincerely care about the welfare of my fellow human beings. I, in fact, am very often moved to tears watching televised world and national news and video clips on social media.

But I believe in, trust in, depend upon, lean upon, God and His ways. Therefore, I am focused on the grace of God to live in this world in every area of my life as a disciple of the King and His Kingdom. I do not have faith in Humanity and politics. Therefore, except for trying to keep well-informed, I am not actively involved in the political arena. And - I don't believe I am

obligated to be involved in the political arena; nor do I feel responsible for any successes or failures in the political arena. But neither do I expect the majority of human beings to choose the "other" arena of God and His ways. In fact, I think that anyone who would **legislate** and try to **enforce** God's ways as He has chosen to reveal in the Bible, not only doesn't understand God and His ways, but also misrepresents, contradicts, and works against God and His ways.

Restating the Essential Differences

God allows His ways to be freely chosen or rejected. (Christians should do likewise.) On the other hand, human governments legislate political policies and programs and punish individual non-compliance. (It seems governments tend to not always punish corporate non-compliance.) This is the all-encompassing human condition: **Non-believers are free to not believe in God and free to not follow His ways; but believers are not free to not believe in Humanity and are not free to not follow human government and its ways. The predominant consensus of Humanity is that we can do without theology, but we can't do without politics.**

This is the harsh reality of the human condition: **The vast majority of human beings are "on their own" - by choice. They have chosen to govern themselves and meet their own needs - without faith in God. Human history plainly shows this has not worked out very well; and there is absolutely no rational reason for having**

hope that it will work out any better in the future.

Again, it is absolutely crucial for those who are non-believers - but also particularly those who call themselves Christians - to understand clearly that the teachings of Christ and the Bible are of benefit only to the followers of Christ. These teachings exist in a different realm than those who are unwilling to follow Christ. **The Kingdom of God cannot be legislated and enforced by human governments and cannot be expected to bring peace and well-being to the human condition, as some mistaken believers would like us to think.**¹⁷ In other words, **you can't change theology into politics.**

Unlike human politics, truly biblical theology makes no claim to eliminating human woe in this age. Jesus, Himself, said things like:
"The poor you will always have with you." (Matthew 26:11; Mark 4:7; John 12:8)

¹⁷ Along with current Christian Nationalism, historically, there are other American examples of this misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Kingdom of God. For example: Puritan Millennialism, Manifest Destiny / American Exceptionalism.

"For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will *also* be famines. (Mark 13:8)

"You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars."
(Matthew 24:6; Mark 12:7)

"In this world you will have tribulation." (John 16:33)

This is how life is in a fallen world for *a*ll human beings - even "Christian" ones. Those "in Christ", through faith, have a future hope. But, sadly, there just isn't any hope for Humanity outside of Christ. Without faith in God and surrender to the lordship of Christ, the feeble political efforts of human governments are doomed to continued failure until the end of the age.¹⁸ At that time, Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will come to establish Shalom – a state of all things being in divine order.

¹⁸ Romans 8:20; Cf. Genesis 3:17-19; Ecclesiastes 1:2



*A Personal Investigation
into the Morality of Voting*

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At Christ's Table ~ ACTpublications

"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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W.D. Furiioso, Writer ~ Frances Furiioso, Editor

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Preface¹⁹

“In”, but “not of”. These are the two contexts in which a disciple of Christ lives – IN the world; but not OF the world.²⁰ For more than two thousand years the Church has struggled to understand what this actually means and has also struggled to discern how to live faithfully in these contexts – the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the World.

At the time of this writing, I’ve been pursuing a biblical worldview for 44 years. I’ve been pursuing a biblical worldview of politics for about 5 years. Before that, I considered myself “apolitical”, as I was fairly disinterested in politics. I can’t fully explain why I became more interested 5 years ago. I still consider myself to be essentially “apolitical” – namely, politics is not the answer to the fallen human condition. However, I think anyone who says they are not at all interested in what goes on in the political arena is not being honest –

¹⁹ I would like to thank Keith T. Graff of the University of Maryland Global Campus in Okinawa, Japan, for his help with edits and comments during the process of writing this essay. (He should not be held liable for anything I have written here.)

²⁰ John 17:13-19

not with others or himself. While politics does not have the power to alter my spiritual life, it most certainly affects areas of my physical life. I am not only concerned about these effects in my personal life, but more so regarding the lives of my children in my extended household. And, while I am far from being altruistic, I do have a measure of authentic concern for truth and justice, poverty and suffering, health and happiness for Humanity at large in its fallen condition.

Now, what we can do to affect the political arena is, I think, highly questionable. I say this because of the shortcomings of the American two-party system, the electoral college system, gerrymandering, corporate funding of candidates, and the paralysis of partisan politics, et. al. Because of these things, I think an individual's participation in the political process seems to be quite impotent. I can totally understand political abstinence because of a lack of faith in the process.²¹

²¹ I personally think that publishing via social media produces more effective change in society than voting. I also think praying is more effective than voting. Of course, we can do all three.

Nowhere in Scripture does God *command* us to vote; but some human governments give us the *privilege* of voting. We don't have voting rights in the heavenly realm. *Voting is an activity in the kingdom of the World.* Yet, as followers of Christ, we also live in the Kingdom of God.

This essay does not purport to be the “official” Christian stance on voting. Nor is its intention to disparage anyone's perspectives on voting, nor to stir up controversy, nor to cause offense. But, rather, it is an honest, personal investigation of the following questions:

- **For a disciple of Christ, is voting moral, or immoral?**
- **Or is voting rather a matter of “faith which you have as your own conviction before God”²²?**

What follows are the “reasonings” I have wrestled with personally in an effort to come to a place of

²² Romans 14:22

discernment and peace before the Lord concerning various issues inherent to voting.

However, what is shared in the *Postscript* I do believe is “what the Spirit is saying to the churches”²³; and therefore, I speak it in faith; and am open to it being spiritually judged according to the New Testament scriptures. “It is written: ‘I believed; therefore, I have spoken.’ Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak.”²⁴

²³ Revelation 2:7, 29, 3:22

²⁴ 2 Corinthians 4:13; Cf. Psalm 116:10

Political Science vs. Political Philosophy

While I may be indicating *some* of what I *believe* about politics, I am writing here mainly to clarify (for myself) my *behavior* with regards to politics. Therefore, maybe I can further introduce this discussion by pointing out a possible difference in two terms: “**political philosophy**” and “**political science**”. *Political philosophy* is the study of *theories* addressing fundamental political issues. *Political science* is the study of *empirical political behavior*. My political philosophy of choice may be “Christian Libertarianism”.²⁵

According to the teaching of Christ²⁶, I live IN the world (but am not OF it). And, therefore, I live under human government – namely, the State / the Empire. And so,

²⁵ N.B., I do not belong to the Libertarian Party, nor any other political party. To learn more about “Christian Libertarianism”, I would recommend starting at this page of the “Libertarian Christian Institute” website:

<https://libertarianchristians.com/get-started-here/>

²⁶ John 17:13-19

this essay is about trying to clarify – *not political philosophy* – but **political science**: Namely, how to best conduct myself **IN** the world, while not being **OF** it – how to best conduct myself with human government – the State / the Empire – specifically with regards to voting.

The World System

Firstly, we must take a look at the context in which voting takes place – “the world”. What does it mean to be “in the World”? I think the subject of “the world” is crucial to understanding the Kingdom of Heaven, along with understanding the kingdom of the World. And yet, this subject of “the world” has been largely ignored by most Christians, or at best, has been misunderstood because of simplistic interpretations. It’s my conviction that this deficiency leads to a perspective that is different from the one Jesus and His apostles had with regards to the place of the Christian²⁷ in relationship with “the world”.

In his First, Second and Third Epistles, 23 times the apostle John uses the word *kosmos* which is translated as “the world”. In the context of his epistles, John is referring to “the world” as *“the course and current of this world’s affairs, which have been corrupted by sin”*.²⁸

²⁷ And the Church (Ecclesia)

²⁸ *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*

Greek scholar Marvin Vincent describes “the world” as *“the sum total of human life in the ordered world, considered apart from, and alienated from, and hostile to God, and of the earthly things which seduce from God”*.²⁹ In his epistles, John uses very simple language; but what he is saying about “the world” has much wider and deeper applications than we might realize. For example, some (including myself) understand the term “the world” in this way: *“An ordered world system governed from behind the scenes by Satan. This system encompasses politics, education, literature, science, art, law, commerce, music -- anything involved in the progress of mankind [humanism]. No matter how good the initial intentions, all organizations created by mankind eventually turn away from Godly power to worldliness. When the influence of Divine Life is removed, organizations gravitate towards materialism, humanism, worldliness, and Satan.”*³⁰

Please refer to the Addendum for additional material on this matter of “The World System”.³¹ Suffice to say here, from a biblical perspective, the world system – the

²⁹ *“Word Studies in the New Testament”*

³⁰ This quote is from a book summary (not an excerpt) of *“Love Not the World”* by Watchman Nee offered by a Davin Dahlgren. This book, as with his many other books, is actually published from the notes taken by his students during Watchman Nee’s talks (1920-1972).

³¹ Also for a more complete treatment of this subject see my articles: [*“The Spirit of the World”*](#) and [*“The Cross & The Powers of Darkness”*](#).

global political, social, cultural, financial, educational, communication systems of the world - are under the control of powers of darkness.³² This includes human governments on all levels in all nations. One of Humanity's root problems is not believing this. In fact, most Christians in America also do not sufficiently believe this.

³² Ephesians 6:12. Cf. 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

A Mixed Multitude

The peoples of the world – in each nation – are comprised of *both* those who believe and follow the Christ and the Christianity which are delineated in Scripture, as well as a majority who do not, including those who think and say they do, but do not. **How does God govern this mixed multitude?**

Firstly, God has revealed Himself, along with His heart and mind, plans and purposes for Humanity in Scripture, which must be understood in light of the New Covenant. And, God has revealed His New Covenant by His Spirit and written words and given every human being the free will choice to enter into covenant with Him through Christ – or choose not to; and then live with the consequences of their choice.³³ So, **how does God govern those who are not in covenant with Himself? THROUGH THEIR OWN FREE WILL CHOICE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT COMBINED WITH**

³³ I think such a perspective is somewhat rare in Evangelical circles. I have never heard a “Progressive Christian” give such an understanding. And, obviously, people of other religions and people of no religion have contrary understandings of God and His creation.

HUMAN GOVERNMENT. Humanity is free to be either God-governed or self-governed. However, relatively few people on the earth understand and submit to God's New Covenant. So, we must consider **how God governs both** - His people, as well as those who are not His people. *How* does He govern those who are *not* in His kingdom, and also those who *are* in His kingdom (but also must live in the world system during this age)? Again, we are **not** talking about the Kingdom of Heaven here – we are talking about the World System.

- How does God govern this “mixed multitude”?
- And what powers has God ordained for human government?

Human Government

“Every person is to **be in subjection to** the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. ²Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and **they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.** ³For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; ⁴for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, **an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.** ⁵Therefore it is necessary to **be in subjection**, not only **because of wrath**, but **also for conscience’ sake.** ⁶For because of this you also **pay taxes**, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. ⁷Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.” Romans 13:1-7

According to this passage, we should “be in subjection to” and “not oppose” the governing authority. It says that we should “pay taxes”; but it does *not* say that we must vote. Voting is not a law but a privilege. We can

be “good” citizens without voting. In point of fact, no one will miss your vote except the politician you didn’t vote for, his party and its agenda, and all the other people who voted for him.

The passage also tells us that God has ordained human government to **protect** those who do good and to **punish** evil doers. Nowhere in the passage - nor anywhere else in the New Testament - has God ordained human government to **provide** for people. (This is of the utmost significance.)

Sacral Societies & Welfare States

There can be a tendency to equate the Old Covenant Jewish system of tithing for charitable support of the poor, the widow and the orphan³⁴ with a modern system of taxation. But, there is an essential difference: Ancient Israel was a “**sacral**” society³⁵ – that is, *a theocracy* – “*the form of government in which a deity of some type*

³⁴ (Hebrew) *Tzedakam*

³⁵ A term used by Leonard Verduin in his book, “*The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*”.

*is recognized as the supreme ruling authority, giving divine guidance to human intermediaries that manage the day-to-day affairs of the government*³⁶ – that is, a society in which the governing laws, policies, and programs were based in a particular religious faith – not by a humanly devised system of government. Ancient Israel was a sacral society. The Imperial Cult of Ancient Rome was a sacral society. Islamic nations are sacral societies. The idea that America was founded as a sacral society is highly debatable; but, in any event, it certainly has ceased to be one quite some time ago.

But what about the New Covenant Church? That could be labeled a sacral society, with the Law of Christ governing all that transpires between all of its members. But remember: It is the “Ekklesia”³⁷ – the “called out” –

³⁶ Merriam Webster’s Dictionary.

³⁷ Strong’s # 1577 (Greek), usually translated, “church”. Some thoughts on using the word “Ekklesia”: **Not everyone identifying with the word “church” is part of the Ecclesia of God. There is only one true Church made up of those who have received the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9-10) - those who “possess the Son”. (1 John 5:11-12)** However, contrary to what is in vogue today for some, I make no distinction between the Greek word, ekklesia, and its English translation, “church”. I use the two words interchangeably. If I use the word “church”, I mean the full and accurate biblical meaning of “ekklesia”. Simply using the Greek word, ekklesia, in and of itself, helps no one understand the biblical meaning. **The biblical meaning will always require explanation for the unlearned.** Therefore, I think the English words, “church”, or “assembly”, or “community” are adequate

that is, it is a society within a larger society – a society called to be separate from the larger society. The Ekklesia is a society, who's government and citizenship is in heaven, but also lives under a human government here on earth. It is IN the World, but not OF the World. **That is the issue.** The Church cannot identify with any earthly system or model of welfare state. To “complicate” matters further: This Christian sacral society (The Church / Ekklesia) doesn't belong to one country or nation – it is international (and, in fact, cosmic³⁸). If God were to reveal by Holy Spirit-inspired scriptures exactly *how* His people in the USA should and should not receive welfare from the US

translations. When writing, I sometimes find myself leaning towards using terms like “the people of God”, or “the disciples of the kingdom”, or “the followers of Christ” - depending on the context. Furthermore, not identifying as “Church” does not “automatically” make us the “Ekklesia”. If we are going to identify as the “Ekklesia”, there must be the reality of being and living as “called out” AND “GATHERED TOGETHER” AND ENGAGED IN THE MATTERS OF THE KINGDOM (it's the latter that is demonstratively lacking today.) Donning the Greek word is duplicitous and inconsistent. If that were the thing to do, why aren't we using Greek words to communicate 100s of other New Covenant truths? Moreover, don't the words “congregation” and “assembly” ALSO conjure up images of people sitting in a BUILDING? Doesn't the term “ekklesia” conjure up the connotation “ecclesiastical” (man-made church systems)? We also have to reckon with Paul's injunction: “Solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.” (2 Timothy 2:14) What do we do with that? I think we are still “missing the mark” and “falling short” with all of this.

³⁸ Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 12:22-24

government, would He also have a different set of Holy Spirit-inspired scriptures to reveal *how* His people should and should not receive welfare from the governments operating under the Nordic model of Welfare States in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland? And then, yet another set of scriptures for His people living Communist countries like China, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos and Cuba. And then, what about His people who happen to be living the United Arab Emirates or other Arab nations which are also a sacral societies (like ancient Israel) – but are governed by the Islamic religion with its system of welfare for the poor³⁹?

We Serve Our Source

No, if we survey the scriptures, we must conclude that God has **not** ordained human government to *provide* for people. Those who do not look to God as Provider, have no other option but to look to themselves and Humanity for provision. Of course, most of those also

³⁹ *Zakat* (Charity)

want human government to help provide for them.⁴⁰ And, since people will ultimately **serve their source**, exchanging control of their personal lives for that **provision**, most human governments, which desire control above all else, are moving more and more towards being the “providers” of Humanity. (Namely, the Antichrist Beast System⁴¹). Therefore, most of us find ourselves living in nations in which *human governments are operating more and more outside that which God has ordained and are becoming more and more in control of our lives through various totalitarian forms of government*. This applies to *all* governments, in *all* nations – regardless of their espoused political philosophies.

⁴⁰ Throughout *most* of human history, social welfare has been relegated to private charities, religious orders and denominations like the Roman Catholic Church. Another example would be the English Poor Law giving Anglican parishes responsibility for social welfare. However, there were a few minimal examples of State welfare programs in Ancient Rome (under Augustus, 27 B.C. – 14 A.D. and under Trajan, 98-117 A.D.), as well as under the Song Dynasty in China, 960-1279 A.D. But, generally speaking, the phenomenon of State welfare is a *relatively* modern practice beginning late 19th, early 20th centuries in Germany (1889), Great Britain (1913), and also in the USA with the Social Security Act of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “New Deal” in 1935. The “Nordic Model” of social welfare exists today in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland. It is worthwhile noting that even today 27% of the world’s population lives in “informal economies” – namely, economies in which there is neither monitoring of income nor taxation, so that those governments are *not capable* of supplying any social welfare.

⁴¹ Revelation 13

The Hopelessness of Human Government

Just as not all cops are bad cops, and not all African Americans are law breakers, and not all Latinos are rapists, and not all White Evangelical heterosexuals are racists, I suppose it is true that not all politicians are corrupt hypocrites. There are politicians on “both sides of the aisle” that are sincerely wanting to do their jobs with integrity. Like the rest of us, they see the social ills in our society and want to *legislate in ways that will help their fellow human beings*. I believe those politicians, along with most people in our country want all people to live and pursue happiness – or as it says in 1 Timothy 2:2: “that we may live a calm, tranquil, undisturbed quiet, peaceful physical life in godliness and honor”.

Here is the problem: Democrats think that goal will be achieved one way, Republicans think it will be achieved another way, and Libertarians think it will be achieved yet another way. And all are vying for our votes, employing what is nothing short of propaganda.

To put it in more spiritual terms: Most likely without their cognizance, it is, in fact, **sin** that Democrats, Republicans and Libertarians are all trying to deal with,⁴² and are, unfortunately, failing miserably. How can those who do not believe that there is such a thing as **sin**, nor acknowledge the existence of “rulers, powers, world forces of darkness, and spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places”⁴³ deal with such? Excuse my sarcasm, but isn’t that like fighting climate change when you don’t believe in the science of climate change? **The effectiveness of all human government and the efficacy of all human legislation falls far short of dealing with the problem and consequential problems of fallen Humanity.** That should be abundantly clear to any rational human being that considers the history of the human race. There is absolutely no historical precedent upon which to place any hope. Faith (trust, dependence upon) human government is “vanity of vanities”.⁴⁴ “... **in the world, without God, without hope....**”⁴⁵

⁴² Cf. Romans 13:3-4

⁴³ Ephesians 6:12

⁴⁴ Ecclesiastes 1:2

⁴⁵ Ephesians 2:12

Two Kingdoms

Martin Luther indicated that Christians live in Two Kingdoms⁴⁶ – one heavenly and one earthly. Through God’s Spirit and written words, as Christians, we can know how to conduct ourselves in the Kingdom of God. But the question *here* is **how are we to conduct ourselves in the world system which is growing increasingly secular and totalitarian⁴⁷?**

⁴⁶ To learn more about Martin Luther’s “Doctrine of Two Kingdoms”, I would recommend “The Ethics of Martin Luther” by Paul Althaus. The following is taken from Doug Douma’s book review of that title summarizing Luther’s view: Luther’s views can be summarized as follows: a) Government is to punish evildoers (as the Left hand kingdom of God).
b) The church, The Right Hand Kingdom, is not to be involved in government itself, but in preaching the gospel.
c) The church and the government shouldn’t cross roles. People are never to be coerced into belief.
d) Christians must submit to the governing authorities. Christians should never rebel against a government even when the government commits crimes.
e) A person should never use violence as a person, but it is allowed when used in its office. This “office” can be either in the government (executioner, judge, soldier, etc.) or in the family (the parents).
f) Laws should be formed by “reason.”
g) Christians are not necessarily better at government than non-Christians.
h) There is no “best” form of government.

⁴⁷ Because of his historical context, namely, the political power of Rome, and the predominant climate of cultural Christianity (Christendom), it seems to me that what Luther had to offer falls somewhat short of fully addressing the times in which we live with the predominant trend towards greater secularism in culture and increasing totalitarianism in governance.

What did Jesus do? Jesus said, “Give to Caesar the things that belong to him; but be sure to give God the things that belong to Him.”⁴⁸ I think it is difficult for us to appreciate how foreign this sounded to the Jews Jesus was speaking to at that time. Yet, we absolutely need to understand and appreciate what He was saying, because we are in the exact same situation now as they were then: As Christians, we endeavor to live according to the laws that govern the Kingdom of God. But the secular society in which we live is governed by a very different set of laws – and are becoming more different as time goes on. With His novel statement Jesus confirmed:

- We are, in fact, living in Two Kingdoms.
- The earthly kingdom is ruled by human governments under the powers of darkness.
- The earthly kingdom is made up of a mixed multitude – that is:
 - The people of God, who submit to God’s rule and serve (worship) God, but are also governed by Caesar (the State).

⁴⁸ Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26

- As well as, the people who have rejected God's rule, and who serve (worship) Caesar (the State), but who believe they are ruling themselves.

All peoples of the world, including God's people, live under some form of human government. The fact is: since the Babylonian Captivity⁴⁹, the people of God have always lived in this Two Kingdom / Mixed-Multitude situation.⁵⁰

So, how *did* Jesus handle it? **Jesus and His disciples never said a word, nor took any action toward changing Caesar's government to be more like God's government. Jesus' followers were a set-apart society within a larger secular society.**⁵¹

⁴⁹ A time of God's judgement upon His people, the Hebrew nation, when He allowed Israel to be defeated by Babylon. There were actually several different times during this period (607-586 B.C.) when the Jews were taken captive by Babylon.

⁵⁰ I personally believe this is the meaning of the biblical term "time of the Gentiles" (Greek: *ethnos*), that is, the time in which God's people live in subjection to the governments of the nations (Greek: *ethnos*) of the world. Cf. Luke 21:24.

⁵¹ In Leonard Verduin's words, "non-sacral" society. (Cf. *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*)

We can see the same situation with Jacob and the sons of Israel in Egypt (before the Babylonian Captivity): For 400 years, they were a society set-apart to God, *but also* under the rule of Egypt (representing the world system at the time); and God had given them a place (Goshen) in Egypt (the world system).⁵² It should be noted that in God's provision for His people in Egypt, **He did nothing to make the surrounding society less pagan, or more religious, or more Israeli, or in any way "nicer"**. In fact, as time went on, He allowed that human government to become oppressive of His people. And, eventually, He delivered His people completely out of that world system. He then brought them into a "Promised Land" and into a covenant with Himself – the Old Covenant – the Mosaic expression of His Kingdom. Of course, the "Promised Land" for believers in the New Covenant is *not* anywhere on this present earth, but rather in the new heaven and the new earth⁵³ – "a better country, that is, a heavenly one".⁵⁴

⁵² Of course, both Egypt and Goshen represent spiritual entities in the New Covenant.

⁵³ Revelation 21:1-8

⁵⁴ Hebrews 11:16

Voting

It must be granted that neither Israel under Egypt, nor Jesus and His followers under Rome had voting rights.⁵⁵ But, we do (in the USA). So, what do we do with those voting rights? As I've already said, voting is **not** commanded by God. But it seems to me that Scripture *does not* overtly condemn voting either. Does God leave it as a matter of choice – “a principle of conscience”, as in Romans 14? As I've already said, one does not have to vote in order to be “a good citizen”. But these are questions being asked in this article:

- Could voting possibly be immoral?
- Is it immoral not to vote?

Political Agendas

What is voting? Essentially, it is aligning oneself with a particular political agenda – supporting a particular politician, along with the particular political party to

⁵⁵ However, the apostle Paul, a Roman citizen by birth, did have voting rights. But, there is no mention of him ever voting. Acts 22:25-28. Cf. Acts 16:37; 21:39; 22:3.

which he/she belongs – including its philosophy, policies, and programs to which he/she pledges to represent. The enabling of particular political actions is the outcome of voting. So, the discernment needed is whether or not a particular party's political platform is to be deemed moral or immoral.

One thing to consider is this: It would be immoral to vote for – align oneself with, support and enable - a particular party platform which you have deemed immoral. **But what if one has concluded that both party platforms are immoral? Would it be immoral to abstain from voting all together? I don't think so, for you have not participated in that which immoral. And, as a voter, one has no other recourse besides the vote to address the immorality of political agendas, with the exception of "Public Demonstration" and "Civil Disobedience".**⁵⁶

But what if there is yet a 3rd party platform which you deemed to be moral? One could align yourself with,

⁵⁶ The subjects of "Public Demonstration" and "Civil Disobedience" are beyond the scope of this essay on "Voting".

support and enable that moral agenda with your vote. But such action has never won a presidential election in America. Isn't that then just a "wasted" vote? I don't think so, because you have "made a statement" – taken a moral stand – by aligning yourself with that which is moral.

The fact that 3rd party voting most likely will only draw votes away from one major party and just serve to promote the other major party is only a negative if one deems either one of the other major parties to have a moral platform to begin with. Also: 3rd party voting could be worthwhile in voting for other political offices. **But is the platform of that 3rd party actually moral in any case?**

Another thing to consider is the fact that one could possibly deem some aspects of a particular party platform moral and other aspects of the platform immoral. But there is only one vote – one alignment - for the entire platform, carte blanche. Do we now weigh up the pros and the cons, so to speak? **Does God, in**

His righteousness, weigh up the pros and the cons? I don't think that sounds like the God who has revealed Himself through Christ and the biblical scriptures.

What about when “God is at work in all things, and causes all things to work together for good”⁵⁷ – is He weighing up the pros and the cons then? I don't think that is the most accurate way of analyzing the work of God in the affairs of men. But we do know that God – in some manner - “changes the times and the epochs; and removes kings and establishes kings; and gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding”?⁵⁸ Exactly how does He do that?

God's Agenda

If we choose to vote, should we expect to change the surrounding society? I don't think we have any right to think such a thing. God didn't do that for Israel. He didn't do that for Jesus and His disciples. And He is

⁵⁷ Romans 8:28

⁵⁸ Daniel 2:21a. It is significant to note how God accomplishes this: “He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding” (v. 21b) and “reveals the profound and hidden things – in the darkness”. (v. 22)

not doing that for many Christians living under totalitarian governments around the world today. The reason for this is because that, in fact, is NOT God's agenda.

According to the New Testament scriptures, God is not interested in *“transforming”* society, but rather, influencing the surrounding society with salt and light. His agenda is to have His people – the set-apart society (Ekklesia) – individually and collectively be a witness to⁵⁹ the larger surrounding secular society. *This will not necessarily transform that society.* It will “save some, snatching them out of the fire”.⁶⁰ That is God's program, which is in progress and will continue until after this creation is destroyed by the fire, and is replaced with a new heaven and a new earth.⁶¹

⁵⁹ This involves communicating the Gospel of the Kingdom through preaching and teaching, as well as through demonstration and modeling. Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10; Romans 10:18; Ephesians 3:10; Colossians 1:6, 23; Revelation 14:6.

⁶⁰ Jude 1:23. I'll return to this pictographic verse later in the essay.

⁶¹ Cf. 2 Peter 3:7-13

The Power of the Vote? Or The Power of God?

But, getting back to the issue of voting ... **Who is in control of who governs the people?** Does God really “change the times and the epochs; and remove kings and establish kings; and give wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding”?⁶² What actually places people in political office? Our votes? Or God? This is akin to the question: “*Who hardened Pharaoh’s heart? Pharaoh? Or God?*” Long story short: **God knows all things – even the free-will choices of human beings – including their votes.**⁶³ Yes, God is in control – not our votes. And He is in control when we vote and when we don’t vote. And “He is at work in all things and causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”.⁶⁴ **Bear in mind, that “good purpose” happens to be “to become conformed to the**

⁶² Daniel 2:21a. It is interesting to note how God accomplishes this: “He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding” (v. 21b) and “reveals the profound and hidden things – in the darkness”. (v. 22)

⁶³ For a more in-depth treatment of the subjects of God’s sovereignty and human free will, see my article [*“Some Thoughts on Evil”*](#).

⁶⁴ Romans 8:28

image of His Son”⁶⁵ – not necessarily that you will have a “nice” life.

Pray and / or Vote

We may vote out of a sense of moral conviction. Or we may not vote out of sense of moral conviction.

Regarding voting and morality, I’d like to discuss a number of things:

Personality, Party, Policies, Programs

The reality is: In our two-party system, voting with moral integrity is extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible. This is what I mean: If we were voting on specific issues, through our vote, we could align ourselves on a particular side of the given issue according to our biblical worldview. But we are not actually voting on specific issues, we are voting for one political party or another. Even voting for a particular “personality” (which typifies American voting) results in a “party vote” because it contributes to the influence

⁶⁵ Romans 8:29

and power of one particular party over another.

Whether we vote "policy" or "personality", we end up aligning ourselves with all the philosophy, policies, and programs of one particular party with a carte blanche alignment with all their various stances on a long list of issues. **Generally speaking, our "party vote" is almost always in moral alignment with one particular issue "of choice", but out of alignment with a number of other issues.** We tend to pick a particular social issue and tacitly say that the biblical worldview on that particular issue is the "Christian vote", and align ourselves with the particular party which has the policies and programs in line with our moral choice. The problem is: There are many other moral issues to be concerned with, which we either ignore, or feel are somehow "less important". This can often result in hypocrisy.⁶⁶ **And all too often, the issue we've placed "at the top of the list" is usually that one which has been appointed the official "political football" by the media.** But, from God's perspective, one issue is not

⁶⁶ An example is voting "Pro-Life", yet having little to no concern about cutting programs to feed children in poverty. Another example would be voting "Pro-Choice" (pro-abortion), yet also promoting various "inclusion" policies and programs.

more important than another. In God's sight, sin is sin is sin.⁶⁷ The concept of voting for "*the lesser of two evils*" is NOT the mind of Christ, nor in alignment with the righteousness of God. Can you imagine Jesus of Nazareth choosing "*the lesser of two evils*"? Can you imagine any of the apostles choosing "*the lesser of two evils*"? Is there anything anywhere in Scripture instructing us to choose "*the lesser of two evils*"? I think praying will accomplish more than voting. But, if we decide that voting is not immoral, we can do both.

"Have a nice life"

I would also like to offer that the motivation behind our "moral conviction" in voting is at least somewhat influenced by a basic desire shared by all Humanity, which is this: We all just want a "nice life" – for ourselves and for our loved ones. If we can't admit to that, we are not being honest. In this life, we all pursue health and happiness for ourselves and for our loved ones. We all do everything we can to have a "nice life" -

⁶⁷ Cf. Matthew 5:18-20, 48

“a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity”,
as it is expressed in 1 Timothy 2:1-4:

“First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions, *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ²for kings and all who are in authority (or high positions), **so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.** ³*This is good and acceptable in the sight of God* our Savior, ⁴who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

In the *Apostolic Bible Polyglot*, that phrase reads:

“that [G2443](#) a calm [G2263](#) and [G2532](#) unassuming [G2272](#) existence [G979](#) should be led [G1236](#) in [G1722](#) all [G3956](#) piety [G2150](#) and [G2532](#) seriousness.” [G4587](#)

I think it is significant what the scripture says about praying for “kings and all those who are in high positions”: The goal of the praying is “that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity”. Paul indicated that “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God”, and that God’s ultimate desire is that “all people would be delivered and come to the full knowledge of truth”. God’s agenda is concerned with

that – knowing the truth and being delivered from “the lie”.⁶⁸

We must also keep in mind something we have already established from Paul’s epistle to the Romans: We live in a fallen world; and God uses even the afflictions, tribulations, pains, sufferings, and general negatives in this life “for His good purpose of conforming us to the image of His Son”,⁶⁹ as well as employing these things to draw “all men to the knowledge of the truth and salvation”.⁷⁰

That may *not* be the goal of politicians, political parties, and human governments. But, according to Scripture, God’s desire for fallen Humanity is truth and salvation. And this scripture passage makes it clear that God also desires what all people really want - “that we may live a calm, tranquil, undisturbed quiet, peaceful physical life in godliness and dignity”.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:10; Jeremiah 9:6

⁶⁹ Romans 8:18-22, 28-29

⁷⁰ 1 Timothy 2:4

⁷¹ 2 Timothy 2:2

I think praying will accomplish more than voting. But, if we decide that voting is not immoral, we can do both.

Pragmatism vs. Principle

Thirdly, there is the problem of Pragmatism vs.

Principle: People have different ideas on how to accomplish that “calm, tranquil, undisturbed quiet, peaceful physical life in godliness and dignity”.

Progressive people are more **pragmatic** – that is:

“Whatever seems like it will work here and now is good.”

Conservative people are more **principled** - namely: *“It*

has to work rightly.” And we also have amoral people –

both Progressives and Conservatives who are power-

hungry - explicitly: *“There’s no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ – only*

what I deem ‘successful’.” And without a doubt, in

American culture today, “success” is achieved solely

through pragmatism – *not by principle*. Voters are told

that to vote 3rd Party - to “make a statement”, to “take a

stand” on principles you believe in - is “a wasted vote”, because it will not produce a “win”, as the only actual “win” will be either the Democrats or Republicans. But for decades and decades now, this pragmatism has done nothing to correct the shortcomings of our two-party, partisan system of politics, nor the ills of our society. This is neither truly “winning” nor “success”.

I think praying will accomplish more than voting. But, if we decide that voting is not immoral, we can do both.

Who Decides What’s “Good” and “Bad”

With Humanity’s universal goal of *“life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”*, who defines and specifies the “good” and the “bad”, the “right” and the “wrong”, the just” and the “unjust”? The people. (They’ve been “playing God” and doing that since the Garden of Eden.) And the majority of these people are not God’s

people, nor are they particularly interested in God's thoughts and ways. But even God's people will often have different interpretations of "good" and "bad" – *depending on their particular material and financial station in life.*

Let's walk through just one example – Health Care: A well-educated, high-earning Christian who has savings can afford his own health care when he gets sick. A not-so-well-educated, not-so-high-earning Christian living paycheck to paycheck may not be able to afford his own health care when he gets sick. According to God's thoughts and ways, the biological family and the spiritual family should help out in this case. But what about believers in impoverished nations where their biological families and spiritual families cannot help?⁷²

⁷² Actually, this is a good example of how the Church could fulfill "doing good to all people, especially to those who are of the household of the faith". (Galatians 6:10) Throughout much of its history, the Church worked to meet the needs of the poor and oppressed; but **this calling has now been abdicated to secular governments.**

And what about all those non-believing people? What are they to do? Look to their biological families and social clubs (which aren't operating according to God's design in any case)? Probably not. When the political parties are offering "free"⁷³ health care in exchange for votes (and control), non-believers will naturally go "the way of the world".

But this isn't about the non-believer, it's about the believer. How does the believer conduct himself in this fallen world system, particularly when he is a believer who is not independently wealthy?

What – on THIS Earth – is the Kingdom of God?

Speaking of "a nice life" - What should be the believer's "kingdom expectation" on this earth - not in the "age to come", new heavens and earth – but **during this age?**

⁷³ Actually, nothing is "free" – some segment of taxpayers is paying for it, while the benefits are being enjoyed by others whose votes have been won because of the "free" stuff.

Is it possible that we are not *on* “*The Road to Serfdom*”, as Friedrich Hayek⁷⁴ warned, but rather are *already* living in a serfdom which is inescapable? Is it correct for a believer to think that he could expect to see the Kingdom of Heaven in this fallen world system to which he is not OF, but is never-the-less IN?⁷⁵ For example: Why does the New Testament not condemn slavery? And again: Why did Jesus say, “The poor you will always have with you”⁷⁶? **Is it possible, that in this age, like physical sickness and death, some form and measure of physical enslavement is something that cannot be totally avoided?** I am referring to an enslavement which is, yes, spiritual, but *also* physical - just as, in this age, eternal life has been lost, both spiritually and physically – we all are “appointed to die”.⁷⁷ **Is total freedom from any form or measure of enslavement even possible in this age?**

⁷⁴ Friedrich Hayek was an Austrian economist, philosopher, and founding member of The Mises Institute who wrote “The Road to Serfdom” in 1944. A .pdf download of a 1945 condensed version of the book is available at:

<http://iea.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/upldbook43pdf.pdf>

⁷⁵ This misconception, held by Christian Postmillennialists and Reconstructionists, is the direct result of a misunderstanding – or lack of understanding – of the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. See my article, [“Your Kingdom Come”](#).

⁷⁶ Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8.

⁷⁷ Hebrews 9:17; Ecclesiastes 3:2

Who can afford to be free of enslavement? The more we possess, the greater measure of self-reliance and freedom we can maintain. But is anyone 100% free of some measure of enslavement? Our goal may be 100% self-sufficiency. But, actually, **no one** is totally self-sufficient. Believers, according to the measure of their faith, can be dependent on God, rather than any earthly system of provision. Of course, non-believers are not even open to that idea. But for those who believe, God can supply supernaturally, even though, very rarely will He provide something from nothing. He almost always provides *through someone*.

He has indicated that He considers it righteous that the biological family and the spiritual family be the “some ones” to provide for those in material need. But isn’t there some measure of accountability owed in return to those who meet our needs – such as: *“We have a right to have some say in how you spend the money we are giving you – it’s called ‘good stewardship’”*. Isn’t this “quid pro quo” arrangement - *“We will do this for you, if you will do that in return”* - akin to the principle of serfdom in which

the serf must answer to the lord for the benefits of sustenance and protection he receives from the lord?⁷⁸

And, what if the biological family and spiritual family cannot help, because they are also needy – as in impoverished nations? In fact, there are places on earth where Christians cannot even look to human government to meet their need, whereas here in the USA, Libertarians, and to a lesser extent Conservatives, can afford to resist the idea. Here in the USA, many people can afford to be philosophical about who they would prefer to meet their needs and how they would prefer to have their needs met. But *some people* in the USA do not have those options. And many, many people on earth do not have those options. So, in that case, would receiving charity from the government be “unrighteous”? Obviously, it is a trade-off for some measure of personal freedom. One could adopt the motto of New Hampshire: “*Give me freedom or give me death.*” **But would it be “unrighteous” in the**

⁷⁸ Serfs worked for the lord of the manor; and the lord gave them a plot of land, food and protection. The serfs were not free because they were bound to the land they lived on and could not move away. If the owner of a manor sold the land, the serfs remained, and had to answer to the new lord of the manor.

sight of God, if one *does* receive aid from human government?

If one is in that needy position – and everyone is to one degree or another - then that will have much to do with how we vote, who we vote for, what we vote for, and what we hope are the results of our voting. In this sense, very, very few people are 100% philosophical in their voting. **Everyone is highly influenced in their voting by their particular material and financial station in life.** For the non-believer, morally, it is a non-issue. But for the believer, is this having “little faith”⁷⁹? And is this being “of little faith” considered unfaithfulness in the sight of God⁸⁰?

And what about me? If I were “hard pressed”, would I continue looking to God as my Provider? Would I trust Him to provide either through my biological family and / or my spiritual family? And if that isn’t happening? Would I set aside my moral convictions and accept government hand-outs, even knowing I am trading in

⁷⁹ Matthew 6:30; 16:8

⁸⁰ Luke 18:8; Romans 14:23; Cf. Hebrews 3:7-4:11

my freedoms in some measure? I think there are a lot of variables which would figure into my choice of behavior.

I know that “setting aside my moral convictions” could **not** be adopted as a New Covenant prescription, but there is the case in Scripture where God told His people to – and enabled His people to - “plunder the Egyptians”, allowing His people to “get free stuff from the State”, as He delivered His people out of the slavery and oppression of the World system.⁸¹

But, in any case, **I think it true to say that our vote is highly influenced by our particular material and financial station in life** - whether we are working or retired, have sought-after jobs skills or not, have higher education degrees or not, have a high earning potential or not, etc. We want the policies and programs which will afford ourselves and our loved ones a “nice life”. This is the underpinning of what has become highly developed “Identity Politics”. The political parties’

⁸¹ Cf. Exodus 3:21-22

practice of “buying of votes” via campaign promises is despicable; but voting that which promises to meet your basic needs - and those of your loved ones – is only natural. Of course, the authentic disciple of Christ is “(continually) seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” because he believes that “his Heavenly Father know that we need all these things”.⁸²

Admittedly, there are certain forms of human government and certain genres of political philosophies, policies, and programs which better allow the Christian to look to God, in faith, for His faithful provision – in the context of personal freedom and responsibility for our own lives. And so, we can vote accordingly. But I maintain that whatever form of government, and whatever philosophies, policies, and programs we align ourselves with through our vote, we will still be aligning ourselves with many other things which are unbiblical and immoral, because no human government, in legislating policies or implementing programs, is capable of the righteous perfection of God. And again – choosing “*the lesser of two evils*” is NOT the mind of

⁸² Matthew 6:32-33. Cf. vv. 31-34.

Christ, nor the righteousness of God. I think praying will accomplish more than voting. But, if we decide that voting is not immoral, we can do both.

Romans 14

One additional thought with regards to the question of the morality of voting: I think it is quite possible that the biblical principle of “Conscience” must be considered: “Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand for the Lord is able to make him stand.... The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.”⁸³

Possibly, in the end – or at least in given circumstances – the question of the morality of voting is a matter of “conscience” and one’s “own conviction before God”.

⁸³ Romans 14:4 & 22

Some Personal Conclusions

I believe God *does* “change the times and the epochs; and remove kings and establish kings; and give wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding”.⁸⁴ Along with this, I also believe “God is at work in all things and causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”,⁸⁵ bearing in mind, that “good purpose” is “to become conformed to the image of His Son”⁸⁶ – not necessarily that you will have a “nice” life.

For more than 70 years, I have never voted for either of the two major political parties in America. I do not have faith in that process. It’s the kingdom of the World and it’s a fallen one at that. It is not the Kingdom of Heaven. It’s a corrupt system ruled by powers of darkness and administrated by fallen people. God is involved, not for the sole purpose of making my life “nice”, but for His

⁸⁴ Daniel 2:21a. It is interesting to note how God accomplishes this: “He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding” (v. 21b) and “reveals the profound and hidden things – in the darkness”. (v. 22)

⁸⁵ Romans 8:28

⁸⁶ Romans 8:29

Kingdom purposes, which He is accomplishing in ways that are higher than my ways.⁸⁷

I realize that if the reader were looking for a “conclusive” answer to the question “Is voting moral or immoral?”, he or she is most likely still looking for that answer. I believe the best I have to offer myself or anyone else is this: The question of the morality of voting is a matter of “conscience” and one’s “own conviction before God”.⁸⁸ However, regarding this issue of the morality of voting, I have personally found all my “reasonings” necessary, and therefore beneficial. I can only hope they were for the reader also.

⁸⁷ Isaiah 55:8-9

⁸⁸ Cf. Romans 14:4 & 22

Addendum

Additional Material on The World System

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12

The World Forces of Darkness

There is the “Father of Lights”⁸⁹ and the “Father of Darkness”. The one whom we could call the “father” of the World Forces of Darkness is Satan, The Adversary - the Enemy of both God and Humanity, the Devil, the Serpent in the Garden.⁹⁰

“Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and brings out a weapon for its work; and I have created the destroyer to ruin.” Isaiah 54:16

From this verse, we can infer a number of things regarding Satan, which are borne out by other scriptures. Firstly, God has created Satan, and that he

⁸⁹ James 1:17-18

⁹⁰ Revelation 20:2-5

has been created for specific purposes in God's dealings with Humanity - that is, God uses him for the work of testing and purging, and for adversity, chastening and judgment. This is borne out in the Book of Job, the earliest book in the Bible, where we see God allowing Satan to afflict and test Job resulting in God's desired goal for good in Job's character and life.⁹¹

There is a recurring statement by the Lord in the Book of Job which I believe is significant:

"Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him."⁹² And again: "So the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life."⁹³

From these statements we can see that it is God Who has allowed Satan the power to afflict Humanity; but it is significant to note that firstly, God has given Satan only limited power; and secondly, the power to afflict evil is in Satan's hand, not God's. God is all good.

"(God) Himself does not tempt anyone."⁹⁴ Satan is in

⁹¹ Job 42; James 5:11

⁹² Job 1:12

⁹³ Job 2:6

⁹⁴ James 1:12-17

rebellion against God, and his purposes are adverse to both God and us. But God works for good even within Satan's evil purposes.⁹⁵ Even in the midst of Satan's work, God is testing, refining, chastening and maturing His children. There are many Scriptures which bear out this thought.⁹⁶

Jesus referred to the Devil as “a murderer” and “the Father of lies”.⁹⁷ In addressing unbelievers, Jesus revealed the following regarding Satan: “You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”⁹⁸

The apostle Paul referred to Satan as both “the prince of the power of the air”⁹⁹ and “the god of this world” who “has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that

⁹⁵ Romans 8:28

⁹⁶ Psalm 119:75; Proverbs 3:11-12; Job 5:17; Deuteronomy 8:5; 2 Samuel 7:14; Luke 22:31; Hebrews 2:10, 12:5-11; Revelation 3:19

⁹⁷ John 8:44

⁹⁸ John 8:44

⁹⁹ Ephesians 2:2

they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ”.¹⁰⁰

Also, in reference to Satan, the apostle John tells us that “the whole world lies under the power of the Evil One”.¹⁰¹ The literal meaning of the Greek phrase translated “lies under the power of” speaks of a trance-like power being exerted over peoples’ minds and lives.

There are passages in both Isaiah and Ezekiel that hint at a plausible speculation as to the origin and fall of Satan.¹⁰² But what is definitely communicated in the scriptures¹⁰³ is not so much a clear scenario of what happened but a clear situation of what exists with regards to the Devil, the Flesh and the World:

Firstly, Satan and his angels are created beings – that is, created by God.¹⁰⁴ At some point before the creation of Humanity, Satan and his angels fell away from God, becoming estranged and antagonistic, so

¹⁰⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:4

¹⁰¹ 1 John 5:19

¹⁰² Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19

¹⁰³ Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 12:9

¹⁰⁴ Colossians 1:16; John 1:3; Romans 8:38

that now there was need that Christ should “disarm them, make a public spectacle of them and triumph over them through His cross.”¹⁰⁵

Secondly, after the material creation, the Serpent tempted Adam and Eve, and through their disobedience they fell into sin - the state of willful independence from God and the resulting separation from God. They abdicated the dominion over the earth given to them by God and forfeited it over to Satan, who was now the god of this world. The consequence was that all Humanity, while maintaining a vestige of the image of God, essentially traded the nature of God for the nature of Satan.¹⁰⁶

Thirdly, human society and culture, which is the creation of Humanity under the power of the Evil One, developed an ongoing system which governs the affairs of Humanity according to the nature of Satan, “the god of this world”, “the prince of the power of the air”, “the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience”. This world system, which is alienated and estranged

¹⁰⁵ Colossians 2:14-15

¹⁰⁶ Genesis 3

from God, oppresses its populace. Humanity is spiritual fodder for the powers and principalities which live parasitically off the sin of those under their power. We now need to look more closely at these World Forces of Darkness and how they work “behind the scenes”, in and through the rulers of this world.

The Sons of Disobedience & The Rulers of This World

Something which needs our comprehensive consideration, but goes beyond the scope of this article to deal with fully is the fact that in Psalm 82 we see that “God takes His stand in *His own congregation*; He judges in the midst **of the rulers**”.¹⁰⁷ Other translations have the verse reading this way: “God stands in **the congregation of the mighty**; He judges among **the gods**.”¹⁰⁸ And, “God stands in **the divine assembly**; He administers judgment in the midst of **the gods**.”¹⁰⁹ Also, “God has taken his place in **the divine council**; in the midst of **the gods** he holds judgment.”¹¹⁰ The Hebrew

¹⁰⁷ Psalm 82:1 *New American Standard Version*

¹⁰⁸ *New King James Version*

¹⁰⁹ *Lexham English Bible*

¹¹⁰ *English Standard Version*

word *elohim* appears twice – firstly in reference to **The Triune God**, and then again in reference to **the rulers** who are also **gods**.¹¹¹ In his book, *“The Unseen Realm”: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*,¹¹² Michael S. Heiser deals comprehensively with the idea that there is a **divine assembly** – a **divine counsel** – which God intended to be “under-rulers” of His creation in accordance with His will – a “power sharing” situation, if you will. But some of these spirit beings sinned and rebelled, resulting in their Fall, and expulsion from God’s presence. These are those who are identified in the New Testament as “the World Forces of Darkness”.

The apostle Paul explains that our Lord has “rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son”¹¹³, revealing that there are two spiritual domains - the “kingdoms of this world” and “the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ”.¹¹⁴ These two domains are populated by either

¹¹¹ Also v. 6

¹¹² There is also a shortened version entitled, *Supernatural: What the Bible Teaches about the Unseen World and Why It Matters*.

¹¹³ Colossians 1:13

¹¹⁴ Revelation 11:15

the “sons of light”¹¹⁵ or the “sons of disobedience”.¹¹⁶ In distinguishing the two groups, Paul wrote this: “You formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”¹¹⁷

Paul explains that there is a “spirit” – specifically, Satan’s - that “is at work in the sons of disobedience” which governs this present world system through exerting spiritual influences on the minds and lives of Humanity.¹¹⁸

This means that “the kingdoms of this world” are influenced by spiritual forces. More specifically, the rulers and governments of the earth are “under the sway of” these spiritual forces. As John had said, “The whole world lies under the power of the Evil One.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Luke 16:8; John 12:36; 1 Thessalonians 5:5; Ephesians 5:8

¹¹⁶ Ephesians 2:2, 5:6 & 8; Colossians 3:6

¹¹⁷ Ephesians 2:2-3

¹¹⁸ Ephesians 2:2-3

¹¹⁹ 1 John 5:19

We can see an example of this in reading the opening verses of Psalm 2: “Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.”

Paul explained that there are “heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion”.¹²⁰ And that “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”¹²¹ The World Forces of Darkness are at work “behind the scenes”, in and through the rulers and governments of this world. In the Scriptures, we often see the World Forces of Darkness being identified with – merged together with - the rulers of the earth, and vice versa. There are passages of Scripture, which some speculate to be referring to Satan himself, that are, at the very least, making reference to evil spirit beings – angelic beings, while at the same time, are addressing earthly kings.¹²²

¹²⁰ Ephesians 1:20-21

¹²¹ Ephesians 6:12

¹²² Isaiah 14:4-23; Ezekiel 28:11-19

One example is in Isaiah:

“Take up this taunt against **the king of Babylon....**
How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son
of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth,
you who once laid low the nations! You said in your
heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne
above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the
mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred
mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I
will make myself like the Most High.”¹²³

And in Ezekiel:

“Son of man, take up a lamentation over **the king of Tyre** and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub (angel) who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade, you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore, I have cast

¹²³ Isaiah 14:4-23

you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub (angel), from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.”¹²⁴

Also, in Daniel:

“He said to me, “O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.”¹²⁵

This familiar passage from the Book of Daniel¹²⁶ clearly shows the involvement of angelic beings in the affairs of

¹²⁴ Ezekiel 28:11-19

¹²⁵ Daniel 10:11-14

¹²⁶ Daniel 10

the governments of worldly kingdoms. Daniel, a Hebrew taken captive as a teenager when Babylon defeated Israel, had over the years become very prominent in the court of Cyrus the king of Babylon because God had given him the ability to interpret dreams and prophecy for king Cyrus. In this passage, Daniel is receiving an angelic visitation in response to his prayers concerning when the Babylonian captivity would end for the Hebrews. What is significant for our study is that on his way to visit Daniel, the angel was resisted by a being which is called **“the Prince of the kingdom of Persia”** – obviously another angelic being – and Michael, the archangel, was sent to help him in the struggle.¹²⁷ Three years earlier, Babylon had been conquered by Persia. This angelic being who was resisting the angel and Michael, the archangel, was exercising resistance because of his concern about what might be taking place in Babylon. For, since Persia had defeated Babylon, this territory was now under his domain.

¹²⁷ Notice that Daniel was not directly involved on this heavenly battlefield. There was no “identifying”, or “binding” of spirits being done in the human sphere.



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W.D. Furioso, Writer ~ Frances Furioso, Editor

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Preface

"There are only two basic ways to organize society: coercively, through government dictates, or voluntarily, through the myriad interactions among individuals and private associations. All the various political "isms" — fascism, communism, conservatism, liberalism, neoconservatism — boil down to a single question. The bottom line of political philosophy, and therefore of politics itself, is, "Who is going to make the decision about this particular aspect of your life, you or somebody else?"

Ed Crane, The Cato Institute

How Does God Govern?

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the ^lalsky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.... God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good." Genesis 1:26-27, 31a

God ordained that human beings should rule over the plant and animal kingdoms - “in His image”. In other words, human beings should govern the creation in a way which is after God’s “image” and “likeness” – namely, govern the way He governs. The purpose of this short article, therefore, is to focus in on some of the essential aspects of how God governs. It is interesting to note that according to the original mandate given in the Garden, *there was no indication of human beings governing one another*. God, the Creator, was Governor.

Choices & Consequences

Of course, it wasn't long before human beings opted for the illusion of "self-government". (Genesis 3:1-7) It is important to note that God allowed this poor choice, because He created human beings with free will - the freedom to choose to love and obey Him, or the freedom to choose to reject Him and live in rebellion against Him.

Contrary to this illusion of "self-governance", the reality was that humanity had, in fact, not only severed relationship with the Creator (Genesis 2:15-17), but also transferred their God-given authority over to their Adversary, "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Immediately (Genesis 4-6), we see that humanity, the whole of creation, and this entire age was subjected to futility. (Romans 8:15-25) All human history, until the coming of the new age with the new heaven and the new earth, would be imprisoned in a fallen condition and in need of redemption.

It seems to me that it is arrogant ignorance for Humanity to think that it has the ability to govern itself apart from God¹²⁸ - all efforts at human government will always fall miserably short. (Romans 3:23 Cf. vv. 9-26) Why any human being doesn't seem to be aware of this (and most are not) can only be explained by the "spiritual blindness" which accompanies the fallen state. (Romans 1:18-32; 2 Corinthians 4:4)

¹²⁸ This is particularly arrogant of ignorant political leaders, who are not born of the Spirit, have essentially no spiritual discernment, and yet attempt to govern while being oblivious to the "spiritual forces of darkness and wickedness" (Ephesians 6:12), and while they themselves are also "under the power of the Evil One". (1 John 5:19)

Human Government

Never-the-less, human beings - even those who were called by God - later asked for a human king to replace God for their earthly governance. And God allowed this. (1 Samuel 8) As human history progressed, humanity developed various forms of human government - monarchy, oligarchy, democracy - with various permutations - all of which have repeatedly failed throughout all human history. Again, there is absolutely no empirical or historical evidence to account for Humanity's continuing hope in self-government. This false hope can only be explained by "spiritual blindness" and rebellion against God. Because of Humanity's fallen condition (separation from the Giver of Life), all forms and efforts of human government are, by nature of the case, doomed to futility. That statement is definitely not the humanistic worldview; but it is definitely the biblical worldview. Humanism, as a worldview, actually makes claim to ability of human government to transform the condition of the world. Yet, there are many humanists who would admit: *"We are only human. We won't reach perfection; but it is up to us to*

do the best we can." It is true - without God, Humanity has no other choice than to "*do they best we can*". The harsh reality is this: It is an "either/or" situation - the only two options are dependence upon God or dependence upon Humanity – the latter being the choice of most human beings. But the latter is doomed to inevitable failure. However, does the former – dependence upon God – make the claim of transforming the condition of the world? As you may realize, various Christians answer that question differently. My perspective – and I will elaborate on it in this article – is contrary to much current theological perspective. **I do not believe it is God's intention to "transform" the condition of this world. Rather, He has indicated that this world will be completely destroyed and pass away; and He will create a new heaven and a new earth for a new age.** (1 Corinthians 7:31; 1 John 2:17; 2 Peter 3:7-13¹²⁹)

¹²⁹ I am aware of the controversy regarding the alternate translation of the end of v. 10: "... and its works will be discovered" instead of "... and its works will be burned up." Since only two out of many manuscripts suggest this reading, and since this reading is quite inconsistent and therefore very problematic to the meaning of the passage, like the majority of Greek scholars, I do not see the necessity for over-spiritualizing the passage to mean that there will be a "renewed" earth instead of a literal "new" earth.

In no way does this mean that Christians are therefore to "withdraw" from the world (John 17:15; Cf. 1 Corinthians 5:9-10). Quite the contrary, we are **sent** into the world as witnesses. (Matthew 10:16; 28:19; Acts 1:8) And in that apostolic **sending**, there is an important distinction to note: Contrary to much current theological perspective, we are called to be **witnesses** - not "transformers". So, in this article, I would like to draw attention to the fact that, if the Church preaches and teaches a form of governance which is "in the image and likeness of God", this would be the way of **witnessing** to the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 24:14), and not that of "transforming" the kingdoms of this World.

Governing Humanity

So, an essential aspect of how God governs is that He has chosen to govern within the context of the free will which He gave to the human beings He created. Given that Humanity chose the path of self-governance independent of God, and went on to develop various forms of human government, is there a particular political philosophy which best reflects this aspect of how God governs? Is there a particular form of human government which might be the "best fit" for governing *all* of Humanity – that is, both those who choose to love and obey God and those who choose to reject God and live in rebellion to Him? The fact that Humanity has this freedom of choice is key to understanding what political philosophy and what form of government may be best suited for the governance of *all* Humanity – fallen and redeemed.

In this quest for "the best form of government", wisdom tells us to never forget the fallen condition of Humanity, and consequently, that the essential differences between God's government and human government

are irreconcilable. Case in point: Quite the opposite of the governance of the God, human government - from its inception - has always been based on coercion - that is, an enforcing of law under threat of some form of violence against the human will, or the human psyche, or the human body; whereas, God's law does absolutely no violence to the human will – nor to the human psyche or the human body. (Psalm 19:7-9).¹³⁰ And, whereas the Lord of Life, came that we "might continually have life, and continually have it in abundance",¹³¹ fallen Humanity, by nature, has the same desires as "their father, the Devil"; and that is, to lie, murder, steal, kill and destroy one another. (John 8:44; 10:10)

Therefore, because of its fallen condition, Humanity requires human government for both protection from wrong-doing and punishment of wrong-doers. And, for as long as they live on this earth, during this age, even human beings redeemed by faith in Christ will also be subject to those same enforcements of protection and

¹³⁰ Please re-read the Preface.

¹³¹ The Greek verb tenses are present active subjunctive – i.e. continuing, even eternally (John 10:28), Word Pictures of the New Testament by A.T. Robertson.

punishment by human governments. (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:11-17)

Just as God allowed ancient Israel to opt for a human king (1 Samuel 8:1-9, 19-22), God has also allowed all fallen Humanity to govern itself according to the various coercions and violent enforcements a given society agrees upon and legislates. This is for the protection of the whole of society. And again, human beings who are redeemed by faith in Christ, if they are guilty of civil wrong-doing, are also subject to punishment for wrong-doing.

We find these parameters of protection and punishment clearly established in Romans 13:1-7. But it is absolutely essential to understand that when Paul writes to the Romans telling them to “submit to the governing authorities”, it is *only* in the context of the government's God-ordain roles of protection and punishment.¹³²

¹³² An objective reading of this passage indicates that Christians are instructed to 1) submit to and not resist government 2) practice good and not evil 3) give respect, honor and taxes to the government which enable it to do its duty. Its duty is to protect people and punish wrong-doers – nothing further. It is not the

We must read Romans 13:1-7 in the context of Romans 12 (the original document has no chapter divisions) where Paul is telling Christians: "Do not be conformed to this world." (v. 1); "Abhor what is evil"; "Cling to what is good." (v. 9); "Bless those who persecute you." (v. 14); "Never pay back evil for evil." (v. 17); "So far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." (v. 18); "Never take your own revenge." (v. 19); "Give food and drink to your enemy." (v. 20); "Overcome evil with good." (v. 21) These verses describe human society operating as God desires. Would God contradict Himself by also commanding people to obey human government when that government is operating contrary to what God desires for human society? Human governments are supposed to maintain what God desires for human society – not usurp it.

It is a mistake to interpret the Romans 13 passage as saying that human governments are to be obeyed even when they are governing in a way contrary to what God

duty of the government to provide health care, education, financial assistance, etc. All such things are over-stepping the ordinance of God for government. The motivation for all such things is control and servitude, which are contrary to freedom of conscience and freedom of choice, as well as the nature of God's redemptive work through the cross of Christ.

has ordained according to the Scriptures. God has not commanded unquestioned, blanket obedience to human governments. It should be obvious that when human governments legislate policies and programs which engineer human society contrary to what God desires, God has not ordained human governments to enforce such things, and therefore, they are not to be obeyed. "We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)

If one surveys in the gospels for Jesus' encounters with human government, and one surveys the Acts of the Apostles for the first century disciples' encounters with human government, and one surveys in the Book of Revelation for the Church's encounters with human governments (particularly chapter 13), it is perfectly obvious that human government, like the whole of the world system, operates in a "hostility towards God", and is "an enemy of God". Therefore, unquestioned, blanket obedience to worldly governments is nothing short of spiritual "adultery". (James 4:4-5)

In order to put forth and insist on the conventional acculturated, patriotic interpretation of Romans 13, one must contradict Jesus, the apostles, the early disciples, and their testimonies which the Holy Spirit has seen fit to record in the New Testament scriptures.

When Peter exhorts the Church to "honor the king" and "submit to the governor", there is absolutely no hint of acculturation or patriotism involved. He is saying to them that, since they are "aliens and strangers", "for the Lord's sake" – that is, for the reputation of their heavenly King, they should "keep (their) behavior excellent" and that "by doing right" they may "silence the ignorance of foolish men" – that is, the accusations and slander of the surrounding society. (1 Peter 2:11-17) We hear basically the same exhortation from Paul in Titus 3:1-2.

And in 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Paul explains that God's purpose for allowing human government to specifically give protection and punishment in human society is so that His people can have "peaceful and quiet lives in all

godliness and holiness”, which is conducive for “people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth”.¹³³

But, because of their rebellion against God, and because of their greed and desire for power (James 4:1-2), and because of their being under the control of the Evil One (I John 5:19), human governments throughout human history have obviously over-stepped what God has ordained, and have done so for rebellious purposes – namely, the control and servitude of people whom God created, and Christ has redeemed. (Cf. 1 Samuel 8:10-18)

Throughout the Scriptures we also see that, although “the prince of the power of the air” and fallen “rulers and authorities” have been “disarmed, exposed, and triumphed over” by the cross of Christ (Colossians 2:14b-15), until the “execution of the judgement written” (Psalm 149:9), which will take place at the end of this age, these forces of darkness will continue in

¹³³ Notice that the Church is to pursue this by means of “petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be(ing) made for all people and for kings and all those in authority”, not by means of voting or political programs.

their rebellion against God and their control of Humanity. (Ephesians 6:12; John 5:19)¹³⁴

Therefore, as Jesus said, we will always have tribulation in the world during this age (John 16:33), because “the spiritual forces of darkness and wickedness” will continue to control the “rulers and powers” (Ephesians 6:12) - that is, the governments and peoples of the world - not only through various coercions, enforcements and violence, but also through continually over-stepping the parameters of protection and punishment into that which God has never ordained for human government – namely, being the source of material provisions and the author of morality for the populace. Whereas protection and punishment have to do with addressing only wrongdoing, governmental legislation of material provisions and legislation of morality have to do with exercising control and servitude: *“He who pays the piper calls the tune.”* And *“Who takes the king’s shilling sings the king’s song.”*

¹³⁴ God’s reasons for allowing this: 1) “for iniquity to become “full” (Genesis 15:16 & Ecclesiastes 8:11) 2) so that more and more human beings coming into the world have an opportunity to receive eternal life. (2 Peter 3:9 & Romans 2:4)

"It was for FREEDOM ...

... that Christ set us free, therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.... For you were called to freedom, brethren; only *do not turn* your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the *statement*, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:1, 13-14 NASB

"Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God." 1 Peter 2:16 ESV

"For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God." Romans 8:19-21

Conscience & Choice

We are investigating the question: What political philosophy and what form of government may be best suited for the governance of *a//* Humanity – both fallen and redeemed? More specifically: Is there a political philosophy which is most suited to the biblical worldview? Is there a particular form of government which inherently contains the elements of freedom of conscience and choice “in the likeness of” God’s way of governing Humanity?¹³⁵ Is there a practical political system for both those who love God and submit to His kingship, as well as all those who don’t (the majority of the earth’s population)? Hopefully, the things which have been stated thus far lay somewhat of a foundational context in which to begin offering a possible answer to that question.

To begin, **allow me to clarify** that according to the biblical scriptures, **I see the establishment of a global totalitarian government which will exist right up to the**

¹³⁵ Again, bearing in mind that any and all forms of human government fall short simply because of the fallen human condition.

time of the return of Christ. Therefore, I do not expect to see the establishment of a "Christian-friendly" political philosophy and government on this earth in this age. Also, from a biblical perspective, I expect every humanly governed society to "fall short" of perfection.

Never-the-less, I seek a philosophy of human government that would best co-exist with the biblical Kingdom of Heaven only for the following reason... for the teaching of such a political philosophy and form of government AS A WITNESS. Also: That such prophetic teaching, being contrary to the "spirit of this age" (1 Corinthians 2:6-8), might serve to "destroy speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, ... taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5); and "disarm rulers and authorities and make a public display of them". (Colossians 2:15)

Now, with such a proposal, I am *not* advocating any political party, nor even a Christian political caucus, but rather the propagation of a political philosophy as a "quiet revolution" in the hearts and minds of people.

The goals being: Clarification of the Kingdom of God and of His Christ and distinguishing it from the kingdoms of this world.

A political philosophy which may best represent the principles of freedom of conscience and freedom of choice - is what some call "Christian Anarchy".¹³⁶ But, "Christian Anarchy" is a problematic title which definitely requires quite a bit of explanation before using it. I don't think that the use of that title is at all necessary, so I prefer not to use it.¹³⁷ Alternatively, some others call it "Christian Libertarianism". I would prefer the adjective "Biblical" to "Christian". Libertarianism may simply be defined as:

¹³⁶ Namely, Vernard Eller and Jacques Ellul, although Ellul never used that exact term.

¹³⁷ The etymology of the term, "anarchy": The word anarchy comes from the ancient Greek ἀναρχία (anarchia), which combines ἀ (a), "not, without" and ἀρχή (arkhi), "ruler, leader, authority." Thus, the term refers to a society "without rulers" or "without leaders." "Anarchism" is a political philosophy that advocates self-governed societies based on voluntary institutions. Vernard Eller used the title "Christian Anarchy" as the title of one of his books. From his subtitle, "Jesus' Primacy over the Powers", we can understand the term to mean no ruler – except the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e. Christ-governed, rather than self-governed, or state-governed.) While Anarchy may often be associated with political revolution or violent overthrow of government, clearly, neither the teachings of Jesus nor His apostles advocate any form of violence what-so-ever. In fact, they do not even advocate any physical revolution or overthrow of government.

A political philosophy which maintains that all people have the right to live as they choose as long as it doesn't violate the rights of others. Those "rights" – understood to be "natural" or "inalienable" – have to do with life, liberty, and property. Libertarianism has been around for a good while and apparently has been experiencing an increased interest in recent times. Elements which would generally be emphasized in a Libertarian presentation would be:

- Individualism
- Individual Rights
- Spontaneous Order
- Rule of Law
- Limited Government
- Free Markets
- The Virtue of Production
- Peace

It is not within the scope of this article, nor do I feel qualified, to delineate the definitions and applications of each of these elements, nor of Libertarianism as a whole. But the video – [*"A Short Introduction to Libertarianism: The Libertarian Mind with David Boaz"*](#) –

discusses these various elements and serves as an excellent overview of Libertarianism.

A "Caveat": Obviously a biblical approach to Libertarianism will differ from a totally secular approach, in that the latter will tend to be almost exclusively **pragmatic** in its "applied politic". While non-Christian Libertarians do use the terms "moral" and "immoral", that morality is humanistic and not necessarily biblically based. So, the "applied politics" will differ between Christian and secular Libertarians.

Still, the general point of this article is that various presentations of Libertarianism seem to generally reflect God's way of ruling in His creation: **Every human being is free to make choices and live with the consequences of their choices.** This is the type of context God establishes with Humanity in the Old Testament, but it is also the same in the New Testament: "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So, choose life that you may live." (Deuteronomy 30:19; Cf. vv. 15-20) This is the context which God Himself establishes for Humanity at

large, yet both Evangelical and Progressive Christians aspire to *legislate* morality and *coerce* human society into a quasi-Christian civil religion. Both Evangelical and Progressive Christians selectively define morality by their particular preferences and emphases, which, as with the Pharisees of old, fall short of the authentic kingdom righteousness in any case!

To over-simplify how a society governed by Libertarian principles might look: Christians would be free to live according to the New Covenant Law of Christ - and then must live with the consequences of their choices. Atheists would be free to live as if there is no God – and then must live with the consequences of their choices. Muslims would be free to live according to the Quran (with the exception of killing "infidels") - and then must live with the consequences of their choices. LGBTQ people would be free to live according to their "identity" - and then must live with the consequences of their choices.¹³⁸ As would be demanded of any political

¹³⁸ No individual, group, government agency or legislation could impose, through physical or legal coercion, the preferences, and choices of one person onto another person. For example, Christians could not outlaw abortion. Nor could any type of "affirming" action between individuals or groups be required by law. For example, a Christian baker would not be required by law to bake a wedding cake

system, the philosophy would need to be applied to all the specific aspects of the life of a society. This is a daunting task, and the results of the efforts will always fall short of perfection. But it seems to me that Libertarianism (and other related political philosophies under the same broad label) makes much more sense for the *non-sacral societies* of the world – namely, *societies which are made up of both "believers" and "non-believers" attempting to co-exist*. Libertarianism seems to be a possible form of government that will make for liberty in a society which has *both* biblical Christians and non-Christians. We Christians need to remember that we are *not* in the Promised Land. Rather, until it passes away and is replaced with a "new earth", we are IN this world, but not OF this world, yet SENT INTO this world. (John 17)

or a gay couple. Gay business owners would be free to choose whether or not they want to service or hire Christians. And Christian business owners would be free to choose whether or not they want to service or hire Gays. All people would be free to live in accord with their preferences, and live with the results of their choices, but not be able to impose their preferences and choices on others.

A Witness to the Image of God?

Again, it is crucial to clarify that we are referring to a **witness** to human beings - but not necessarily a transformation of human society. The calling of the Church is *not* to improve or transform the condition of human society. **Jesus did not do that.** He also did not commission His apostles to do that; and He is not going to accomplish that through His Church. The calling of the Church is *to be witnesses* of the only thing that will ultimately improve the human condition - the Kingdom of Heaven. We are called to preach the gospel of the Kingdom and model the Kingdom. (Matthew 24:14) **The Kingdom of God can exist only in and among those who have been regenerated with the Spirit of Christ.** (John 3:3-5; Romans 8:9) The Kingdom of God cannot exist outside of Christ the King. To be in the Kingdom one must be **in Christ**. The Kingdom of God will not exist in the whole of human society during this age. This age and the very elements of the earth and heavens will pass away. (2 Peter 3:10-13¹³⁹) Everything

¹³⁹ Cf. footnote on p 7.

must be shaken - but we have a **different Kingdom** which cannot be shaken. (Hebrews 12:25-29)

In the New Testament scriptures – namely, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, their Epistles, and the Book of Revelation - I do not see Jesus, nor His apostles involved in the political process in any way - not even voting.¹⁴⁰ While I hesitate to call it "sinful", there is absolutely no New Testament precedent for Christian political involvement. In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul tells us to pray for the government, but he doesn't tell us to "partner" (align ourselves with, join in association with) with human governments. (2 Corinthians 6:14) In Romans 13:1-7, Paul tells us to submit to the government, but he does not tell us to "align ourselves with or join in association" with human governments. In 2 Timothy 2:3-4 Paul tells us that a soldier of King Jesus does not "entangle himself in such affairs (transactions, negotiations)". I believe the pragmatics of politics very much fits this Greek word.¹⁴¹ I do not see Christian involvement in politics in the New Testament.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. My article [*"IN the World, But Not OF the World"*](#).

¹⁴¹ pragmateia, Strong's # 4230

What I *do* see in the New Testament with Jesus and His disciples is that the Church pretty much *ignored* the activities of the State - not even interacting with politicians except when they were arrested and imprisoned. They focused on preaching the gospel of the Kingdom and being **witnesses** to the Kingdom (rule) of God to all "those who have ears to hear" and "who-so-ever will", as well as "**making known the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities**". (Ephesians 3:10)

This "making known" / witness of the kingdom includes the Church's social involvement. Contrary to the political goals of both Evangelical and Progressive Christians, there is absolutely not one verse of scripture in the New Testament indicating that the Lord intends to address social needs through government programs. But there are plenty of references regarding the Church's role in doing this. Yet, like other aspects of the kingdom life (educating our children, helping the poor, caring for the sick, visiting the imprisoned, et. al.) the Church has been abdicating these responsibilities to

the government, thus making the government her "source" in these areas of life of instead of looking to the Heavenly Father working in and through His "household of faith". (Galatians 6:10; Cf. 1 Timothy 5:8)¹⁴² Since human beings "serve their source", the inevitable outcome of this posture is "Statism" - a 21st Century form of Emperor Worship – servitude to the State.

"You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings." 1 Corinthians 7:23

¹⁴² In another article, [*"The Way of God and The Way of Humanity"*](#), I have dealt with God's alternative to politics as the way to address the issues and needs of the surrounding society. And there is much more to communicate about the specifics of the calling of the Church. I address this in an article entitled [*"Concerning Gathering"*](#).

For Further Reading

- Boyd, Greg: *"The Myth of a Christian Nation"*
- Cullman, Oscar: *"Christ and Time"; "The State in the New Testament"*
- Dawn, Marva: *"Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacling of God"; "Joy in Our Weakness"*
- Eller, Vernard: *"Christian Anarchy: Jesus' Primacy Over the Powers"*
- Ellul, Jacques: *"The Presence of the Kingdom"; "The Subversion of Christianity"; "Anarchy and Christianity"; also "Understanding Jacques Ellul" by Greenman, Schuchardt & Toly*
- Pilgrim, Walter: *"Uneasy Neighbors: Church and State in the New Testament"*
- Verduin, Leonard: *"The Reformers and Their Stepchildren"; "The Anatomy of a Hybrid"*
- Wink, Walter: *"Naming the Powers"*
- Yoder, Paul: *"The Politics of Jesus"*

Links on Libertarianism

(Regarding further research and study of Libertarianism: There are a good number of organizations with websites advocating Libertarianism, but I hesitate to list them as it may be taken as an endorsement. The two I have listed here are more

dedicated to the study of the nature, history and propositions of Libertarianism.)

- www.Libertarianism.org
- www.LibertarianChristians.com



The
Root
Problem
with
**“Progressive
Christianity”**
is

Self- Righteousness

Governing Humanity

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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Preface

Throughout human history, there have always been people – seemingly, a majority - who do not receive God’s inspired written words as truth, or His Spirit as life. Scripture describes these people as being “futile in their speculations”¹⁴³ which “exalt themselves against the knowledge of God”¹⁴⁴. They are “darkened in their understanding”¹⁴⁵, and put forth “philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ”¹⁴⁶. Rather than petitioning the Holy Spirit to help them pursue the mysteries of God in the scriptures, they *move off the ground of truth* and fabricate human interpretations of the things of God.

Along with missing out on eternal life, there are a number of other sad and unfortunate things about this: These people may call themselves Christians and believe that they are Christians. They may be sincerely

¹⁴³ Romans 1:21

¹⁴⁴ 2 Corinthians 10:5

¹⁴⁵ Ephesians 4:18

¹⁴⁶ Colossians 2:8

motivated, or at least as sincere as any of us fallen creatures can be. They are often very intelligent people. They may be very loving people. They may be family members and friends. The people I am referring to in this article are known as “Progressive Christians” – religious Progressives.

Introduction

While it is more commonly known as “*Progressive Christianity*”, in this article, I will be referring to it as a “religion” as it does not represent authentic biblical Christianity. The purpose of this article is to establish why I believe it is a true to state that Progressive Christianity is not authentic biblical Christianity.

To begin, we need to define the subject matter. By its very nature, character, tenets, and practices, this religion embraces Progressive politics. Therefore, I believe defining Progressive Christianity in terms of how it intersects with Progressive politics is an accurate way to introduce our subject matter.

Religious and political progressivism intersect primarily with their common focus on the issues of social justice, the marginalized, and inclusivity in society. Religious Progressives view political activism as an outworking of one’s faith. Consequently, religious Progressives advocate for political parties and governmental policies

and programs which are concerned with social justice, the marginalized, and inclusivity in society.

Often citing parts of the Mosaic Law in the Old Testament and some of the teachings of Christ in the gospels, religious Progressives endeavor to procure political means to work towards social and economic justice in society.

Also, modeling Old Testament prophets, religious Progressives endeavor to *“speak truth to power”*, focusing on “systemic inequality”. These things mimic the rhetoric and activities of progressive politics which also seeks to use government enforced legislation to address poverty, health care, inequality, discrimination, and immigration.

Emphases of progressive religion are diversity and inclusivity focusing on what are considered “marginalized” identities and groups in society. With an emphasis on *“love one another”*, politically, this translates into advocating for the rights of racial and sexual minorities.

Progressive religion also concerns itself with the stewardship of the creation. Politically, this aligns with “Climate Change” and Environmental agendas and efforts.

Historically, religious Progressives were dedicated to peace-making, non-militarism, and non-violence. This remains to be true for only certain groups today.¹⁴⁷ Generally speaking, religious Progressives no longer refrain from discord and violence but are identified with what is called a “Cancel Culture”, as well as public demonstrations which often morph into rioting and political violence. The connection with progressive political emphases on peaceful, non-violent, diplomatic solutions no longer is a tenet of progressive religion in general.

Religious Progressives see political activism as the main vehicle for systemic change and reform in institutions and society. Research suggests

¹⁴⁷ Primarily denominations rooted in the Anabaptist tradition, like the Amish, Mennonites, Hutterites, and also Quakers and Brethren.

that religious Progressives tend to be engaged in *a broader range of political issues* than religious Conservatives.¹⁴⁸

Historically religious Progressives have stood for “separation of Church and State”. It is true that many – maybe most - religious Conservatives are seen as wanting a return to a connection between Church and State in that they believe America’s Constitution was founded on Christian principles, a “Manifest Destiny”, “American Exceptionalism”, and is therefore “a Christian Nation”. I have written extensively why I believe these perspectives and “Christian Nationalism” is a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Kingdom of God.¹⁴⁹ But the fact is, religious Progressives are likewise guilty of the very same merging of Church and State in their political pursuits of enforced legislation, political policies, and government programs in accord with their particular religious and

¹⁴⁸ Center for American Progress (2008), “On the Left and Right, Activists are Driven by Religious Convictions” (2009), and Public Religions Research Institute’s Economic Values Survey (2013).

¹⁴⁹ [“The Way of God & The Way of Humanity”](#), [“IN the World, But Not OF the World”](#), [“How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity?”](#), [“Church, Culture, & The Ekklesia”](#), [“Do Not Be Entangled”](#).

political preferences and emphases. Suffice to say here, God's Heavenly Kingdom which Jesus of Nazareth and His apostles preached is a Third Way essentially and altogether different from *both* "Progressive Christianity" and "Christian Nationalism".

Missing the Atonement

A Case Study – Walter Rauschenbusch

Hopefully the **Introduction** will suffice for an initial definition of Progressive Religion. But now, let's look at the roots of Progressive Religion in order to get more insight into its nature, character, tenets, and practices.

Most likely a very intelligent and loving person, I think the man named Walter Rauschenbusch may be a good example or case in point of someone whom I believe *moved off the ground of truth*, rejected the inerrancy of the scriptures¹⁵⁰, rejected the biblical efficacy of the atonement¹⁵¹, and in the end, fabricated a human interpretation of the things of God, which became known as “The Social Gospel”. Because I have befriended a number of religious Progressives, I have been interested enough to do some research on this

¹⁵⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inerrancy_of_the_Bible In this message, I will be footnoting links to articles on Wikipedia. My purpose here is to simply and briefly provide a convenient overview of a term or topic. In no way do I consider Wikipedia the “final authority” on a subject, nor do I necessarily subscribe to all that is posted there. Regarding any term or topic mentioned in this message, I recommend further personal research and study.

¹⁵¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atonement_in_Christianity

man who was a key figure in the Social Gospel movement in the USA.

Rauschenbusch lived in the late 1800s and early 1900s¹⁵² – a postmillennial¹⁵³ season in church history prior to World War 1. Like many other theologians at this time (as well as now) he most likely found resonance with particular theologians from earlier in church history. A prime example would be Peter Abelard (1079-1142) who proposed what became to be known as his *Moral Influence Theory*.¹⁵⁴ In a nutshell, this atonement theory states that *Christ died to influence humanity toward moral improvement*. This theory denies that Christ died to satisfy any principle of divine justice but teaches instead that His death was designed to greatly influence mankind with a sense of God's love, resulting in softening their hearts and leading them to repentance. **Thus, the Atonement is not directed towards God with the purpose of satisfying His righteousness, but towards human**

¹⁵² Rauschenbusch was born on October 4, 1861 in [Rochester, New York](#) (my hometown) and died July 25, 1918.

¹⁵³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postmillennialism>

¹⁵⁴ See Addendum: Historical Theories of the Atonement

beings with the purpose of influencing them towards a just and moral society.

Abelard's *Moral Influence Theory*, along with Charles Sheldon's "Christian Socialism" and novel, *"What Would Jesus Do"* (1891), were significant influences on Walter Rauschenbusch. At age 17 he experienced a personal religious conversion, but later felt that this experience was incomplete, as it focused on repentance from personal sins but not from social sins. Rauschenbusch later wrote: *"Because the Kingdom of God has been dropped as the primary and comprehensive aim of Christianity, and personal salvation has been substituted for it, therefore men seek to save their own souls and are selfishly indifferent to the evangelization of the world."*

When he attended Rochester Theological Seminary, now called Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School¹⁵⁵ where his father was a professor, Walter's earlier beliefs were challenged. He learned of the Higher

¹⁵⁵ This school, located in Rochester, New York (my hometown), was originally founded in 1850, and is today a bastion of progressive theology known for its propagation of feminist views, support for the ordination of women, as well as its affirmation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender ministers.

Criticism¹⁵⁶, which led him to later comment that his *"inherited ideas about the inerrancy of the Bible became untenable."* **He also began to doubt the substitutionary atonement;** in his words, *"it was not taught by Jesus; it makes salvation dependent upon a trinitarian transaction that is remote from human experience; and it implies a concept of divine justice that is repugnant to human sensitivity."*

One can see that Rauschenbusch was intelligent and motivated by love for Humanity. His formative ministry experiences played on these traits and served to draw him in a particular theological direction, particularly with regards to the Atonement and the Kingdom: *"In the 1880s Walter Rauschenbusch was a Baptist pastor in the Hell's Kitchen district of New York City, where he served a poor, hurting, immigrant congregation and where he converted to the social gospel. His searing encounter with urban poverty, especially the funerals that he performed for children, drove him to political activism and a social-progressive understanding of Christianity."*

"Rauschenbusch had preached the liberal idea, derived from Albrecht Ritschl¹⁵⁷, of Christianity as an ellipse with two

¹⁵⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Higher_Criticism

¹⁵⁷ A German theologian (1822-1889)

*centers: eternal life as the goal of individual existence and the kingdom of God as the goal of humanity. The old pietism and the social-ethical Jesus of modern theology folded together. But while in Germany in 1891, it occurred to Rauschenbusch that Jesus had one center, the kingdom of God. Jesus proclaimed and launched a postmillennial idea of the coming reign of God; and the church was supposed to be a new kind of community that transformed the world by the power of Christ's kingdom-bringing Spirit."*¹⁵⁸

In 1907, he wrote the classic, *Christianity, and the Social Crisis*, and in his *Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917), he wrote that for John the Baptist, the baptism was "*not a ritual act of individual salvation but an act of dedication to a religious and social movement.*"

Rauschenbusch defined sin as betrayal of the bonds of care among human beings. He believed that the root of sin is not rebellious refusal to obey God, but a deep-seated selfishness. He saw selfishness as more than a personal failing – it was a transpersonal evil, institutionalized in social systems that benefit some

¹⁵⁸ Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis* by Gary Dorrien
<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=3501>

individuals while exploiting and oppressing many others.¹⁵⁹

As a consequence of his theological evolution, Rauschenbusch did not view Jesus' death as an act of substitutionary atonement but in his words, he died *"to substitute love for selfishness as the basis of human society."*¹⁶⁰ This perspective, in turn, shaped his understanding of the kingdom. As I said, this is a good example or case in point of *moving off the ground of truth* and fabricating human interpretations of the things of God.

¹⁵⁹ Rauschenbusch also devoted considerable effort to explicating the problem of evil, which he saw embodied not in individuals, but in "suprapersonal entities", which were socio-economic and political institutions. He found four major loci of suprapersonal evil: militarism, individualism, capitalism and nationalism. To these he juxtaposed four institutional embodiments of good: pacifism, collectivism, socialism and internationalism.

¹⁶⁰ He cited these six "social sins" which according to him, Jesus bore on the Cross: Religious bigotry, the combination of graft and political power, the corruption of justice, the mob spirit (being "the social group gone mad") and mob action, militarism, and class contempt.

The Mysteries of God

People may label themselves as “Christian”; and they may be intelligent, sincerely motivated, and loving; but the simple and harsh reality is this: What is not Biblical is not Christian. If one rejects the Canon of Scripture as the inerrant written word of God, one is also rejecting the Author of those scriptures – the Holy Spirit.

According to the apostle Paul, when we are merely “natural” and not “spiritual”,¹⁶¹ and are not grounded in the scriptures, we will be subject to “every wind of doctrine”¹⁶², even “doctrines of demons”¹⁶³.

Edith Stein (1891-1942), a German, Jewish philosopher who converted to Christianity, made this statement:
*“The Christian mysteries are an indivisible whole...If we become immersed in one, we are led to all the others...from the crib to the Cross.”*¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ 1 Corinthians 2

¹⁶² Ephesians 4:14

¹⁶³ 1 Timothy 4:1. Cf. [*“Deconstruction, deconversion, & the Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit”*](#).

¹⁶⁴ *The Writings of Edith Stein*, p.31. Please note: I find this a useful quote; but do not necessarily identify with all of Edith Stein’s perspectives on the Christian mysteries.

When we look into the mystery of the Incarnation which took place at the birth of Christ, we are led to the mystery of the Atonement which took place at His crucifixion on the Cross.

The mystery of the Incarnation is that which John referred to in his gospel.¹⁶⁵ It is “the mystery of Christ” which Paul referred to in his epistles¹⁶⁶, and more specifically, “the mystery of godliness”:

“And without controversy
great is the mystery of godliness:
God was manifested in the flesh,
Justified in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the Gentiles,
Believed on in the world,
Received up in glory.”
1 Timothy 3:16 NKJV

In the verse just before this, Paul referred to “the household of God”, “the Church of the Living God” as “the pillar and the ground of truth”. Then in this verse

¹⁶⁵ John 1:1, 14

¹⁶⁶ Colossians 2:2; 4:3 and Ephesians 3:4

he gives us a summary of that truth – “God was manifested in the flesh....”

In addition to the many psalms in the Old Testament, there are canticles recorded in the gospels¹⁶⁷. And along with the “spiritual songs”¹⁶⁸ Paul refers to in his epistles (which were likely spontaneously improvised songs¹⁶⁹), there are also hymns recorded in his epistles which the early Church used to sing – rehearsing the foundational doctrines of Christ in their gatherings.¹⁷⁰ This passage in 1 Timothy 3:16 is an example of such a hymn.¹⁷¹

Now, when Paul wrote the words, “without controversy”, he certainly was not saying that this mystery had not created controversy – for it certainly had created much controversy. What he was saying is this: *“There’s no argument here – we must confess that the mystery of godliness is very profound.”* Or in different

¹⁶⁷ Luke 1:46-55; Luke 1:68-79; Luke 2:14; Luke 2:29-32

¹⁶⁸ Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19-20.

¹⁶⁹ 1 Corinthians 14:32

¹⁷⁰ 1 Corinthians 14:26; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19-20.

¹⁷¹ Other New Testament hymns: Ephesians 5:14; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:3.

words: *“We must admit, we can see how the mystery of godliness would be extremely difficult for non-Christians to accept.”* This sentiment comes through in J.B. Phillips translation in Modern English: “No one would deny that this religion of ours is a tremendous mystery, resting as it does on the One Who showed Himself as a human being.”

For a certainty, the idea that God became a human being and then was crucified on a cross for the atonement of sin was very difficult to embrace by many in the first century, throughout church history, and still today. John’s gospel opens with these statements: “In the beginning was the Logos and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God.... And the Logos became a human being....”¹⁷² The concept of Logos as the mind and message of God was not and still is not at all controversial; it is, in fact, widely accepted under various names by various philosophies and religions¹⁷³.

¹⁷² John 1:1 and 14 specify that the Word became flesh – a human being. Later at the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) it was further specified that in taking humanity upon Himself, Christ did not experience a loss of His divine nature in any way but continued to be fully God as He was fully human and lived a truly human life. (The doctrine of the hypostatic union) This was necessarily specified in order to address Gnostic heresies challenging the humanity of Christ.

¹⁷³ The Hebraic concept of “wisdom” is equivalent to the Greek concept of “logos”. Philo, a Greek-speaking Jew in Alexandria, Egypt, utilized the Greek term “logos” in his definition of God and exploration of the connections between

But the idea of the Logos having to be born a Human Being, always has and still is resisted and rejected except by Biblical Christianity. And that is a primary goal of this article: To define those aspects of the mysteries of the Incarnation and Atonement which makes Biblical Christianity distinct from all other forms of philosophies and religions, including those which freely use the label of “Christian”, but are in fact, not biblical and therefore not authentically “Christian”.

Platonic philosophy and Judaism.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philo's_view_of_God#The_Logos Some examples of the concept of “logos” embraced by other non-Christian philosophies and religions are: Higher consciousness of [Yoga](#), Objective consciousness ([Gurdjieff](#)), Buddha consciousness of [Theosophy](#), Cosmic consciousness or [God-consciousness](#) of [Islam](#) and [Hinduism](#), Christ consciousness of [Christian Mysticism](#). Other examples can be found in a Glossary of New Thought terms: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_New_Thought_terms

The Incarnation – Atonement Connection

The issues being investigated here can be voiced with the following questions¹⁷⁴:

- *“Couldn’t the logos just be a message to be communicated in a variety of formats - why did it have to become a human?”*
- *“Couldn’t the Christ have been a spirit being like an angelic messenger, or a spirit guide, or a spiritual force like ‘Christ Consciousness’ - why did the Christ have to be born as a human being?”*
- *“Couldn’t the one mediator between God and man had been an angel - why did it have to be the Man, Christ Jesus?”¹⁷⁵*
- *“Couldn’t the availability of the ‘Christ Consciousness’ have been the ‘good news’ - why did Paul insist on the gospel being ‘Christ crucified’?”¹⁷⁶*

The message of the Cross is that Jesus was crucified to atone for the sins of humanity, which, by the way, is based on the presuppositions of both Sin and the Fall. If from the first century up to today most people find the

¹⁷⁴ I have also addressed these issues in my book, [*“The Spirit of the World”*](#), Part 2: “Do Not Believe Every Spirit”.

¹⁷⁵ 1 Timothy 2:5

¹⁷⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:3

message of the Cross to be either an offense or foolishness, why does Paul insist that it is, in fact, “the power and wisdom of God”?¹⁷⁷

It is impossible to understand the mysteries of God without the written words of God and their Author, the Spirit of God. An insufficient biblical understanding of the Incarnation will lead to an unbiblical understanding of the Atonement. Let’s look at some “Incarnational” scriptures with a view to seeing how they relate to the Atonement. What will emerge clearly is that “the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world”¹⁷⁸ was born to die.

“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.” 1 John 4:2-3

From these verses, we see that the spirit of the Antichrist attacks the Incarnation, that is, the humanity

¹⁷⁷ 1 Corinthians 1:18, 24

¹⁷⁸ Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8

of the Christ, and has been doing this since the birth of Christ¹⁷⁹, during the days of the Early Church¹⁸⁰ and throughout church history, even to the present.

The Church is called to preach the gospel – in words and deeds. Paul tells us that “God has committed to us the word of reconciliation”,¹⁸¹ but people are, in fact, reconciled to God only as Paul said: **“in (Christ’s) fleshly body through (His) death”**.¹⁸² Not even the death of a martyr, or a Gandhi, or a Martin Luther King Jr. can reconcile someone to God.

¹⁷⁹ Matthew 2:16-17

¹⁸⁰ An example is **Gnosticism** (from the Greek: *gnosis* meaning *knowledge*.), a philosophic movement influenced by the Greek mystery religions that challenged Biblical Christianity with teachings of the need for special spiritual enlightenment, and a mis-guided emphasis on the spiritual realm with a view that the material realm was evil. The Canon of Scripture was developed out of necessity as the response of the early church to the various Gnostic heresies. John’s 1st Epistle was written to address the roots of these Gnostic heresies which were influencing some in the Church: viz. The view that the Christ had not come in the flesh – as a human being. Because the Gnostics had a problem with the humanity of Christ i.e. that He had come in the flesh – as a human being, they devised various heresies to explain away His humanity. e.g. *Docetism* (from the Greek: *dokein* meaning *to seem*.) was a teaching which held that Christ only *seemed* to have a genuine body of flesh and to suffer and die. Another theory suggested that the Christ, who was spirit, took *on* the body of Simon of Cyrene (Mark 15:21) shortly before he was crucified.

¹⁸¹ 2 Corinthians 5:19

¹⁸² Colossians 1:22

And Peter concurs when he tells us that the Christ “suffered in the flesh”¹⁸³, and was “put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit.” – that is, He “died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God.”¹⁸⁴ Only the death and resurrection of Christ bring people to God. The good works of Christians, no matter how moral or “sacrificial” will never bring anyone to God. A line from a song of the sons of Korah says: “No man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him.” David sang: “Salvation belongs to the Lord.”¹⁸⁵ And God has ordained that salvation be affected only by the birth and death of Christ – the Incarnation and the Atonement of the Cross.

“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh.” Romans 8:3

This verse tells us how God ordained to deal with the Problem of Sin: The verse mentions the word “flesh”

¹⁸³ 1 Peter 4:1

¹⁸⁴ 1 Peter 3:18

¹⁸⁵ Psalm 3:8

three times. As the Greek scholar, A.T. Robertson, explains: *“He condemned the sin of men, and the condemnation took place in the flesh of Jesus.”* The sin was Humanity’s sin, for Jesus was without sin.¹⁸⁶ The sin was in Humanity, but the condemnation was in the fleshly body of Jesus.¹⁸⁷ The Christ had to become human in order to take on the condemnation of sin in His human body. God overcame sin through the Incarnation and the Atonement of the Cross.

The following verses describe the High Priest God ordained for that sacrifice:

¹⁷ “He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. (Hebrews 2:17-18) ¹⁴ “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our

¹⁸⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:21

¹⁸⁷ Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 784

weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:14-15

The High Priest God ordained for this sacrifice had to be both the Son of God and the Son of Man in order to perfectly fulfill His unique ministry.¹⁸⁸

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin¹⁸⁹ on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

In “the righteousness of God”,¹⁹⁰ only One who was both fully God and fully human could pay the price for Humanity’s sin. Only a human being, like ourselves, who was tempted with sin, yet without sin, could both identify with the human condition yet also provide a solution to the human condition.

¹⁸⁸ Matthew 3:15

¹⁸⁹ 1 Peter 2:22

¹⁹⁰ Romans 1:17; 3:22; Philippians 3:9

His Kingdom & His Righteousness

Many who are sincerely motivated to work for the betterment of the human condition and alleviate human suffering site Jesus' words, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness...", saying that the kingdom of God is a kingdom in which exists justice, equal opportunity, human rights, freedom from poverty, etc.

"His Kingdom"

But, what *on this earth* – not in the "new heavens and new earth"¹⁹¹ - but what *on this earth* is this kingdom? This is what Jesus said about His kingdom:

"²⁰Now He was questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, and He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs that can be observed; ²¹nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.' ²²And He said to the disciples, 'The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. ²³And they will say to you, 'Look there,' or 'Look here!' Do not leave, and do not run after them. ²⁴For just

¹⁹¹ Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13

like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day.’” Luke 17:20-24

Basically, Jesus said to the Pharisees that His kingdom is invisible, at least on this present earth – “no signs to be observed”. It is not limited to a physical location – “not here, and not there”. Yet he was also said to the Pharisees the kingdom is here and visible because He Himself was there and visible. Unfortunately, they *did not* recognize Him as the Christ of the kingdom. But He also said to His disciples, who *did* recognize Him as the Christ of the kingdom, that when the time came that He was no longer on the earth, they again wouldn’t be able to visibly see the kingdom – implying they would have to look “within” their hearts. Interestingly, Greek scholars are divided down the middle with regards to whether the statement should be translated “The kingdom of God is **in your midst**.”¹⁹² Or “The kingdom of God is **within you**.”¹⁹³ However this particular passage should be translated, taking Scripture as a whole, both aspects are true of the kingdom of God.

¹⁹² F.B. Meyer and Robert Trench, *New American Standard Version*

¹⁹³ F.F. Bruce and A.T. Robertson, *New International Version*

Jesus said the kingdom had come because He, the King, was in their midst, yet, except for the Romans, everyone else lived in a world full of injustice and human suffering. If **“righteousness”** is a just and moral human society, it was not seen on the earth even when Christ Jesus was here. In this age, He said that “His kingdom is not of this world”, “not from here”, “not of this realm”¹⁹⁴ - **it is a spiritual kingdom existing in the hearts of His true disciples.**

“His Righteousness”

But what does the Lord mean by “His righteousness”? The biblical understanding of “righteousness” is rooted in terms of covenants and relationships, that is, *what God does* in fulfillment of the terms of the covenant that He establishes with His people.¹⁹⁵ This is summed up in the declaration: “The Lord our righteousness.”¹⁹⁶ The heart of New Testament teaching about righteousness is the New Covenant concept of “the righteousness of

¹⁹⁴ John 18:36

¹⁹⁵ 2 Chronicles 12:6; Psalm 7:9; Jeremiah 9:24; Daniel 9:14

¹⁹⁶ Jeremiah 23:6

God”.¹⁹⁷ These are the things Paul taught: “The righteousness of God is the righteousness which comes through faith in Jesus Christ.”¹⁹⁸ “Faith is credited as righteousness.”¹⁹⁹ And, “the righteous shall live by faith.”²⁰⁰

The “righteousness of God” – “the righteousness that comes from God”²⁰¹ is being in right-relationship with God through faith in the Jesus Christ – that is, faith in His Incarnation and Atonement on the Cross.²⁰² A “righteousness” that doesn’t acknowledge sin, and the need for Atonement of Sin is not “His righteousness”.²⁰³ We cannot have peace with God

¹⁹⁷ Matthew 6:33; Acts 17:31; Romans 1:17; Ephesians 4:24; James 1:20

¹⁹⁸ Romans 3:22

¹⁹⁹ Romans 4:4; James 2:23

²⁰⁰ Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11

²⁰¹ Romans 1:17; 3:22; Philippians 3:9

²⁰² 1 Peter 2:24

²⁰³ Such is the case with of the first and second centuries, as well as its re-emergence throughout the centuries, even today in the New Age movement. Because the early Gnostics viewed the material realm as being evil, some of their teachings asserted that sin is not a moral failing but a problem arising from the mixing of the spiritual and material realms. (*The Gospel of Mary*) It may be that those who left the Johannine community valued the spiritual realm and despised the material realm in such a way that it led them to lay all their emphasis on the heavenly Christ rather than the human Jesus. A misguided emphasis on the spiritual, led them to believe that salvation was being set free from the evil material realm, ultimate redemption would do away with the material realm, it therefore didn’t really matter how they behaved in this material realm, and that whatever they did in their bodies could not be considered sinful. A modern-day example of a sect that holds to and practices this teaching is the *New Apostolic*

without coming into right-relationship with God through faith in Christ.²⁰⁴ In the same way, neither can there be the “shalom” of world peace with a just and moral society without coming into right-relationship with God through faith in Christ, the Prince of Peace²⁰⁵.

Isaiah prophesied:

¹⁵ Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high¹⁷ And the work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness, and confidence forever. ¹⁸ Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation, and in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places. Isaiah 32:15, 17-18

I do believe that in “the new heavens and new earth” “righteousness will dwell” in the sense of a just and moral society. But as Peter explains, that will be after “the heavens pass away, being destroyed by burning”, and after “the elements are destroyed by melting with intense heat”, and after “the earth and its works are

Church. Indeed, in a Gnostic document it is stated that “we have not sinned”. (*Second Treatise of the Great Seth*) In his epistle, John addressed exactly this perspective: I John 1:8-10

²⁰⁴ Romans 5:1

²⁰⁵ Isaiah 9:6

burned up” – in other words not on this present earth.²⁰⁶

People may be sincerely motivated to work towards a just and moral human society, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that motivation, as long as we realize that these human efforts do not establish the kingdom of God. If we say, “*This is the kingdom of God.*”, we are not only deceiving ourselves, but also others – giving them “a different gospel”, leading them to believe they actually have the kingdom and the righteousness. That is not only spiritually dangerous, but also blasphemous in that it denies Christ’s Incarnation and Atonement for sin through the death of His human body on the Cross. I use the word “denies” in that it would render these mysteries redundant. And that denial is what the apostle John identified as the spirit of error and the spirit of the anti-Christ.²⁰⁷

“That is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for

²⁰⁶ 2 Peter 3:10-13

²⁰⁷ 1 John 4:1-3

those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false.” 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11

There are two reasons why people “believe what is false”:

1) “The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ”²⁰⁸ ... and he is able to do so because ...

2) they love something more than the Truth – specifically, pride in their own righteousness.

This is exactly what caused most of Israel to reject Jesus as the Messiah the first time He came to earth. They didn’t understand the mystery of the Incarnation. And the mystery of the Cross was an offense.

The gospel of the kingdom is that through Christ’s Incarnation and Atonement on the Cross, “God demonstrated *His* righteousness”²⁰⁹, not that Humanity

²⁰⁸ 2 Corinthians 2:4

²⁰⁹ Romans 3:25-26

can demonstrate our righteousness here on this earth. Those who would establish a kingdom on this present earth by their own righteousness seek a city whose builder and maker is Humanity. That is Babylon.²¹⁰ But those who “confess that they are strangers and exiles on this earth” – “those of whom the world is not worthy” – “say such things making it clear that they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”²¹¹

²¹⁰ Genesis 11; Revelation 14-18

²¹¹ Hebrews 11:13-16 and v. 38

Addendum

Theories of the Atonement

The Incarnation, by God's design leads to The Atonement, which in turn has implications regarding His Righteousness and His Kingdom. Each of these mysteries warrants its own exposition. But at the center of this "equation" is the Atonement. As I mined the treasury of Scripture in the writing of this article, it seemed that the main vein I found myself excavating was that of the Atonement. So, I thought it would be good to include as an Addendum the development of the theories of the Atonement throughout church history. What follows is a slightly edited version of [*"The Atonement of Christ"*](#) from Theopedia.com The editors of Theopedia are from a Calvinistic background, but their article maintains an objectivity which would also accommodate the Arminian perspective of "Unlimited Atonement". (See "The Extent of The Atonement" below.)

Historic Theories

- **The Ransom Theory:** The earliest of all, originating with the Early Church Fathers, this theory claims that Christ offered himself as a ransom (Mark 10:45). Where it was not clear was in its understanding of exactly to whom the ransom was paid. Many early church fathers viewed the ransom as being paid to Satan.
- **The Recapitulation Theory:** Originated with Irenaeus (125-202 AD). He sees Christ as the new Adam, who systematically *undoes* what Adam did. Thus, where Adam was disobedient concerning God's edict concerning the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, Christ was obedient even to death on the wood of a tree. Irenaeus is the first to draw comparisons between Eve and Mary, contrasting the faithlessness of the former with the faithfulness of the latter. In addition to reversing the wrongs done by Adam, Irenaeus thinks of Christ as "recapitulating" or "summing up" human life.²¹²
- **The Satisfaction (or Commercial) Theory:** The formulator of this theory was the medieval theologian Anselm of Canterbury (1034-1109), in his book, *Cur*

²¹² http://www.theopedia.com/Recapitulation_theory_of_atonement

Deus Homo (lit. *Why the God Man*). In his view, God's offended honor and dignity could only be satisfied by the sacrifice of the Godman, Jesus Christ. "Anselm offered compelling biblical evidence that the atonement was not a ransom paid by God to the devil but rather a debt paid to God on behalf of sinners." Anselm's work established a foundation for the Protestant Reformation, specifically the understanding of justification by faith.²¹³

- **The Penal-Substitution Theory:** This view was formulated by the 16th century Reformers as an extension of Anselm's Satisfaction theory. Anselm's theory was correct in introducing the satisfaction aspect of Christ's work and its necessity; however, the Reformers saw it as insufficient because it was referenced to God's honor rather than his justice and holiness and was couched more in terms of a commercial transaction than a penal substitution. This Reformed view says simply that Christ died for man, in man's place, taking his sins and bearing them for him. The bearing of man's sins takes the punishment for

²¹³ http://www.theopedia.com/Satisfaction_theory_of_the_atonement

them and sets the believer free from the penal demands of the law: The righteousness of the law and the holiness of God are satisfied by this substitution.

- **The Moral-Example Theory (or Moral-Influence Theory):** Christ died to influence mankind toward moral improvement. This theory denies that Christ died to satisfy any principle of divine justice but teaches instead that His death was designed to greatly impress mankind with a sense of God's love, resulting in softening their hearts and leading them to repentance. Thus, the Atonement is not directed towards God with the purpose of maintaining His justice, but towards man with the purpose of persuading him to right action. Formulated by Peter Abelard (1079-1142) partially in reaction against Anselm's *Satisfaction theory*, this view was held by the 16th century Socinians. Versions of it can be found later in F. D. E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and Horace Bushnell (1802-1876).²¹⁴
- **The Governmental Theory:** God made Christ an example of suffering to exhibit to erring man that sin is displeasing to him. God's moral government of the

²¹⁴ http://www.theopedia.com/Moral_Influence_theory_of_atonement

world made it necessary for him to evince his wrath against sin in Christ. Christ died as a token of God's displeasure toward sin, and it was accepted by God as sufficient; but actually, God does not exact strict justice. This view was formulated by Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) and is subsequently found in Arminianism, Charles Finney, the New England Theology of Jonathan Edwards (the younger), and Methodism.²¹⁵

Modern Theories

- **The Declaratory Theory:** A version of the Moral Influence theory, wherein Christ died to show men how greatly God loves them. This view held by Albrecht Ritschl (1822-89).
- **The Guaranty Theory:** Reconciliation is based not on Christ's expiation of sin, but on His guaranty to win followers and thus conquer human sinfulness. This view held by J. C. K. von Hofmann (1810-77).
- **The Vicarious Repentance Theory:** by John McLeod Campbell (d. 1872). It assumes that a perfect repentance is sufficient to atone for sin. In his death,

²¹⁵ http://www.theopedia.com/Governmental_theory_of_atonement

Christ entered into the Father's condemnation of sin, condemned sin, and by this, confessed it.

- **The 'Christus Victor' or Dramatic Theory:** by G. E. H. Aulén (1879-1977). The atonement is viewed as divine conflict and victory over the hostile powers that hold humanity in subjection. This is a modified form of the classic Ransom theory with the emphasis on Christ's victory over evil.²¹⁶
- **The Accident Theory:** Christ's death was an accident, as unforeseen and unexpected as that of any other victim of man's hatred. This view is usually found outside of mainstream Christianity.
- **The Martyr Theory:** Christ gave up His life for a principle of truth that was opposed to the spirit of His day. This view is usually found outside of mainstream Christianity.

²¹⁶ http://www.theopedia.com/Christus_Victor

The Sufficiency of Christ's Person and His Atoning Death

The deity of Christ establishes the infinite intrinsic value of his person. Since Jesus Christ is the Godman, truly God and truly man, his death is also of infinite intrinsic value and all-sufficient as a sacrifice. The book of Hebrews clearly says that the sufficiency of Christ's death negated the need for additional sacrifices. The biblical word translated *once for all* (Greek *ephapax* in Rom. 6:10; Heb. 9:26, 28; 10:10) is clearly a contrast with the Old Testament yearly sacrifice on the Day of Atonement and declares the complete sufficiency of Christ's death.

The infinite intrinsic value and all-sufficiency of Christ's death is a doctrine maintained in the Reformed tradition. The Canons of Dort formulated at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619), state: This death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sins, of infinite value and worth, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world. This death is of such great value and worth

because the person who submitted to it is not only a true and perfectly holy man, but also the only begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for these qualifications were necessary for our Savior. Further, this death is of such great value and worth because it was accompanied by a sense of the wrath and curse of God, which we by our sins had deserved, (Second Head, Articles 3 & 4). John Owen (1616-1683) echoes the same position, "It was then the purpose and intention of God that his Son should offer a sacrifice of infinite worth, value, and dignity, sufficient *in itself* for the redeeming of all and every man, if it had pleased the Lord to employ it to that purpose. . . . Sufficient we say, then, was the sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of the whole world, and for the expiation of all the sins of all and every man in the world," (*Works*, vol. 10, pp. 295, 296).

The Extent of The Atonement

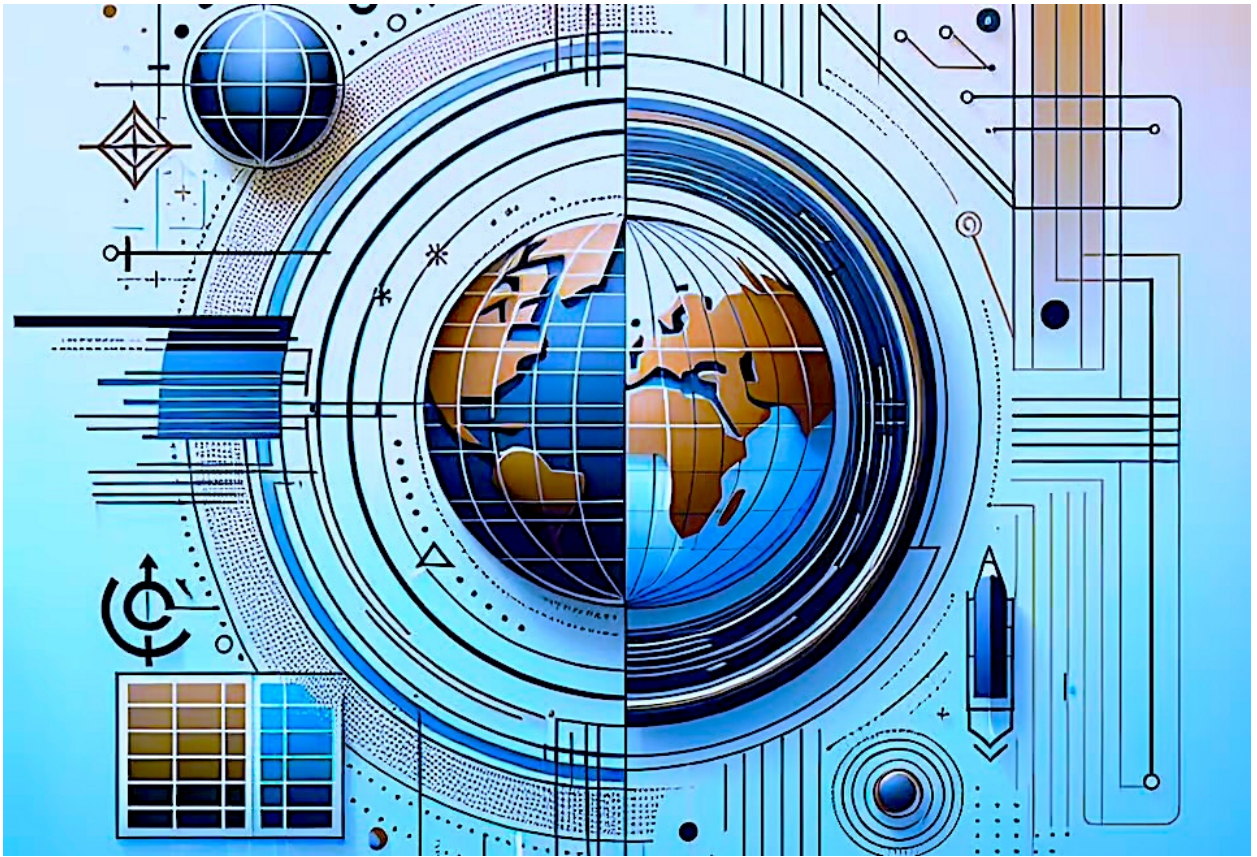
Did Christ intend to accomplish redemption, propitiation, and reconciliation for every man? Did He intend to make salvation possible for all men?

Calvinism: The design of the atonement was to redeem the elect. i.e. “Limited Atonement”.²¹⁷

Arminianism: The design of the atonement was to make all men savable. i.e. “Unlimited Atonement”.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ http://www.theopedia.com/Definite_atonement

²¹⁸ http://www.theopedia.com/Universal_atonement



Globalism & God

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1 Corinthians 2:13

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Preface

It seems obvious to me that as time goes on, accurate discernment of world events reveals a state of affairs which we could label as “Globalism²¹⁹ vs. Nationalism²²⁰”. While the phenomenon has been with us throughout human history, since WW2, Globalism has been the prevailing zeitgeist. Globalism’s co-operative co-existence amongst nations is being credited with political and economic benefits, and even a purported morality. Globalism is popular. Of course, in response or reaction, temporary resistance movements of Nationalism arise.²²¹ This is a natural reaction to the threat of losing national identity, culture, political and economic autonomy, and the like. We could “*point the finger*” and name certain nations as perpetrators of

²¹⁹ “Globalism emphasizes the importance of viewing the world as a single, interconnected whole, often advocating for economic and political integration among countries and economies.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*

²²⁰ “Nationalism emphasizes loyalty, devotion, or allegiance to a nation or nation-state, holding that such obligations outweigh other considerations.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*

²²¹ Current (2025) examples: India - under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Hungary - Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Russia - under President Vladimir Putin, Turkey – under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, China – under President Xi Jinping, and the United Kingdom - The Brexit referendum in 2016.

Globalism, and credit certain political ideologies, and certain political parties as architects of Globalism. But human nature being what it is, I'm inclined to believe that *any* nation having the resources, prospects, and clout could, in some measure, turn "globalist" in pursuit of power and control.

Among those who identify as "Christian", there are some who lean toward Globalism and some who lean toward Nationalism. On the basis of Scripture,²²² my perspective is that, in spite of sporadic Nationalist movements and temporary political victories, Globalism will continue to increase until the return of Christ. However, at the time of this writing (2025), there are "pockets" of Nationalism around the world, and specifically what has been dubbed as "Christian Nationalism" in the United States.

In this article, I am not advocating Globalism – far from it, as it is an anti-Christ Babylonian system.²²³ Nor am I

²²² Daniel 2:41-42, 7:7-8, 23-24; Revelation 13:7, 16-17; 17:12-13.

²²³ Revelation 17:1-18

advocating “Christian Nationalism”²²⁴, to which I am also adverse, because it is a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Kingdom of God.²²⁵ (I have discussed things relating to these issues in other articles.²²⁶) Nor is it within the scope of this article to detail the evils of Globalism and Nationalism. **The purpose of this article is to simply point out what Scripture has to say about Globalism. And to infer that what the inspired written words of God have to say represent God’s view of Globalism.**

²²⁴ In *The Cross of War: Christian Nationalism and U.S. Expansion in the Spanish-American War*, Matthew McCullough defines American Christian nationalism as “an understanding of American identity and significance held by Christians wherein the nation is a central actor in the world-historical purposes of the Christian God.”

²²⁵ There are certain aspects of Christian Nationalism – such as believing a nation has been specially chosen by God, and defining national identity in Christian terms - which make for an interesting correlation between Christian Nationalism and Baalism, the Old Testament pagan religion: The title "Baal" means "lord" or "owner" and was used to refer to different **local manifestations of a deity associated with a specific region serving as the patron deity of a particular place.** This localization of Baal worship fostered **a sense of religious nationalism and collective identity**, as each community saw its own Baal as **a protector and benefactor**, often in direct competition or contrast with neighboring communities and their deities.

²²⁶ [*“The Spirit of the World”*](#), [*“Facing the Future”*](#), [*“Defining the ‘Elementary Principles of the World’”*](#), [*“Church, Culture, & the Ekklesia”*](#), [*“How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity?”*](#), [*“IN the World, But Not OF the World”*](#), [*“The Mysteries of the Kingdom of God”*](#), [*“Seeing the Kingdom Through the Cross”*](#), [*“The Way of God, & the Way of Humanity”*](#), [*“Who Is This King of Glory?”*](#), [*“Your Kingdom Come”*](#).

Scripture indicates God repeatedly “nationalized” global movements, in a manner of speaking. This is to say that God is clearly against Globalism. But that is not to say that God is for Nationalism, per se. For this Constantinian civil religion is the “*Achilles Heel*”²²⁷ – the “*fly in the ointment*”²²⁸ – of American Christianity, as well as other European nations in recent history. No, **God is neither for Globalism nor Nationalism:**

“Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, he raised his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us or for our enemies?” He said, “**No, neither;** rather I have come now *as* captain of the army of the LORD.” And Joshua fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down, and said to him, “What has my lord to say to his servant?” Joshua 5:13-14

God is “for” His Kingdom which includes people redeemed from all nations:

²²⁷ Merriam-Webster Dictionary: “Achilles' heel: a vulnerable point. ‘When the hero Achilles was an infant, his sea-nymph mother dipped him into the river Styx to make him immortal. But since she held him by one heel, this spot did not touch the water and so remained mortal and vulnerable, and it was here that Achilles was eventually mortally wounded.’”

²²⁸ Ecclesiastes 10:1 “Dead flies turn a perfumer’s oil rancid.”

“⁹And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are You to take the scroll and to break its seals; for You were slaughtered, and You purchased people for God with Your blood **from every tribe, language, people, and nation.** ¹⁰You have made them into a **(one) kingdom** and priests to our God, and they will reign upon the earth.’” Revelation 5:9-10

Choosing a title for this article migrated from “Globalism & the Christian” to “Globalism & the Bible” to, finally, “Globalism & God”. Again, the purpose of this article is to simply point out what Scripture has to say about Globalism. And to infer that what the inspired words of God have to say represent God’s view of Globalism. **And thus, we can align our perspective with God’s on the subject:**

“We are asking God that you may **see things, as it were, from his point of view** by being given spiritual insight and understanding.” Colossians 1:9 J.B. Phillips

Genesis 10 & 11

¹Now these are the records of the generations of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and sons were born to them after the flood.

³²These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their descendants, **by their nations**; and out of these, **the nations were separated** on the earth after the flood.” Genesis 10:1 & 32

The genealogies of Noah’s three sons - Shem, Ham, and Japheth - are given in Genesis 10. There are 70 nations listed in Genesis 10, and “**the nations were separated** on the earth after the flood.”

¹Now all the earth **used the same language** and the same words. ²And it came about, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let’s make bricks and fire them thoroughly.’ And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. ⁴And they said, ‘Come, **let’s build ourselves a city**, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and **let’s make a (one) name for ourselves**; otherwise, we will be *scattered* abroad over the face of all the earth.’ ⁵Now the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the men had built. ⁶And the Lord said, ‘Behold, they are **one people**, and they all have **the**

same language. And this is what they have started to do, and now nothing which they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let Us go down and there **confuse their language**, so that they will not understand one another's speech.' ⁸**So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth; and they stopped building the city.** ⁹Therefore it was named Babel, because there the Lord **confused the language** of all the earth; and from there **the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.**" Genesis 11:1-9

So, here we see the nations which existed after the Flood attempting to unify – join together as one nation. God's response was to **scatter them back into separate nations.**

Deuteronomy 32

⁷Remember the ancient days; bear in mind the years of past generations. Ask your father and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you. ⁸When the Most High **gave the nations their inheritance,**²²⁹when **he divided up humankind,**²³⁰ **he set the boundaries of the peoples,** according to the number of the heavenly assembly.²³¹ ⁹For the Lord's allotment is his people, Jacob is his special possession."

Deuteronomy 32:7-9 NET

This is an excerpt from the "Song of Moses" which was sung when God transferred leadership of Israel from Moses to Joshua who would lead the people into the promised land, where they would need to contend with

²²⁹"The Lord delegated jurisdiction over the nations to his angelic host (cf. [Dan. 10:13-21](#)), while reserving for himself Israel, over whom he rules directly. For a defense of the view taken here, see M. S. Heiser, "[Deuteronomy 32:8](#) and the Sons of God," *BSac* 158 (2001): 52-74." *New English Translation (NET) Notes*.

²³⁰"Sons of Man", NASB, or "sons of Adam", KJV.

²³¹"'Sons of God' is undoubtedly the original reading; the MT and LXX have each interpreted it differently. MT assumes that the expression "sons of God" refers to Israel (cf. [Hos. 1:10](#)), while LXX has assumed that the phrase refers to the angelic heavenly assembly ([Ps 29:1](#); [89:6](#); cf. as well [Ps 82](#)). The phrase is also attested in Ugaritic, where it refers to the high god El's divine assembly. According to the latter view, which is reflected in the translation, the Lord delegated jurisdiction over the nations to his angelic host (cf. [Dan. 10:13-21](#)), while reserving for himself Israel, over whom he rules directly. For a defense of the view taken here, see M. S. Heiser, "[Deuteronomy 32:8](#) and the Sons of God," *BSac* 158 (2001): 52-74." *New English Translation (NET) Notes*.

all the various nations which were inhabiting it.²³² This song was basically a history of God's faithfulness to Israel. According to Moses, **God had divided up Humanity into separate nations, with separate geographical boundaries.**

²³² There were 7 nations collectively known as the Canaanites, the decedents of Canaan, son of Ham and grandson of Noah: Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Deuteronomy 7:1.

Psalm 82²³³

¹God stands in **the assembly of El**;²³⁴ in the midst of **the gods** he renders judgment. ²He says, ‘How long will you make unjust legal decisions and show favoritism to the wicked? (Selah) ³Defend the cause of the poor and the fatherless. Vindicate the oppressed and suffering.

⁴Rescue the poor and needy. Deliver them from the power of the wicked. ⁵They neither know nor understand. They stumble around in the dark, while all the foundations of the earth crumble. ⁶He said, ‘**You are gods; all of you are sons of the Most High.**’ ⁷Yet you will die like mortals; you will fall like all the other rulers.” ⁸Rise up, O God, and execute judgment on the earth! For you own all the nations.”

²³³ New English Translation (NET)

²³⁴ “The present translation assumes this is a reference to the Canaanite high god El, who presided over the Canaanite divine assembly. (See [Isa 14:13](#), where El’s assembly is called “the stars of El.”) In the Ugaritic myths the phrase ‘dt ’ilm refers to the “assembly of the gods,” who congregate in King Kirtu’s house, where Baal asks El to bless Kirtu’s house (see G. R. Driver, *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, 91). If the Canaanite divine assembly is referred to here in [Ps 82:1](#), then the psalm must be understood as a bold polemic against Canaanite religion. Israel’s God invades El’s assembly, denounces its gods as failing to uphold justice, and announces their coming demise. For an interpretation of the psalm along these lines, see W. VanGemeren, “Psalms,” EBC 5:533-36.” New English Translation (NET) Notes.

In this Psalm, Asaph confirms what Moses said in the “Song of Moses”²³⁵ – namely that **God had separated the nations**. But it also informs that **the various nations were spiritually governed by pagan gods**²³⁶ upon whom God was here passing judgment for their “unjust legal decisions and favoritism to the wicked”.

This is what God wanted to see on the earth:

“³Defend the cause of the poor and the fatherless. Vindicate the oppressed and suffering. ⁴Rescue the poor and needy. Deliver them from the power of the wicked.”

But it is significant to note that He gave this command to elohim, the “assembly of El”, “sons of God”, “divine assembly”, “divine council” – *not* to any human government. From this I deduce: God’s intention is that any human government “having authority from God”²³⁷ is to follow the influence of *spiritual* government – be it

²³⁵ Deuteronomy 32:7-9

²³⁶ (Hebrew) *Elohim*, the “assembly of El”, “sons of God”, “divine assembly”, “divine council”. See: Michael S. Heiser, “Deuteronomy 32:8-9 and the Old Testament Worldview,” Faithlife Study Bible, John D. Barry, Michael R. Grigoni, et al. (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2012).

²³⁷ Romans 13:1

Yahweh or the “assembly of El”, “sons of God”, “divine assembly”, “divine council”. Of course, in this case, the spiritual governments are “the rulers, the powers, the world forces of this darkness, the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places”²³⁸ – namely the *fallen* “assembly of El”, “sons of God”, “divine assembly”, “divine council”.

In Genesis, God commanded Humanity to rule over plants and animals – not other human beings.²³⁹ And according to Romans 13:1-5, the role of human government, “having authority from God”, is to **protect** people from evil doers, and to **punish** evil doers. God intends nothing more from human government. But what we have - until the return of Christ - is “the god of this world”²⁴⁰ and his fallen spiritual forces governing human governments in ways which are not in accord with “having authority from God”.

Asaph ends his psalm with this plea: “⁸ Rise up, O God, and execute judgment on the earth! For you own all the

²³⁸ Ephesians 6:12

²³⁹ Genesis 1:28-29

²⁴⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:4

nations.” What is God’s response to the corruption of the nations through the influence of the elohim, the “assembly of El”, “sons of God”, “divine assembly”, “divine council”? We could frame the question differently: *“How does God govern all those on the earth who are outside His Kingdom?”* I have written extensively in answer to that question in an article entitled [“How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity?”](#). But for here, let’s look at another psalm which speaks of **God’s response to the governments and peoples of the nations:**

Psalm 2²⁴¹

“¹Why do the nations rebel?²⁴² Why are the countries devising plots that will fail?²⁴³ ²The kings of the earth form a united front; the rulers collaborate against the Lord and his anointed king.” (vv. 1-2)

David²⁴⁴ describes the nations of the earth as being in rebellion against God, rejecting His appointed King and Kingdom, and as having some sort of global agenda.

³They say, “Let’s tear off the shackles they’ve put on us. Let’s free ourselves from their ropes.” (v. 3)

Rejecting the sovereignty and law of God, the governments and peoples of these nations choose self-governance. This is Fallen Humanity carrying on with the same choice that was made in the Garden – that is, the decision to live independently of their Creator God.

²⁴¹ *New English Translation (NET)*

²⁴² *“The question is rhetorical. Rather than seeking information, the psalmist expresses his outrage that the nations would have the audacity to rebel against God and his chosen king.” New English Translation (NET)*

²⁴³ *“Heb “devising emptiness.” The noun רִיק (riq, “emptiness”) may characterize their behavior as “worthless, morally bankrupt” but more likely refers to the outcome of their plots (i.e., failure). As the rest of the psalm emphasizes, their rebellion will fail.” New English Translation (NET)*

²⁴⁴ Acts 4:24-26 attributes David to be the author of Psalm 2.

⁴The one enthroned in heaven laughs in disgust; the Lord taunts them. ⁵Then he angrily speaks to them and terrifies them in his rage, saying, ⁶**‘I myself have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill.’**²⁴⁵ ⁷The king says, ‘I will announce the Lord’s decree. He said to me: ‘You are my son.’²⁴⁶ This very day I have become your father.²⁴⁷ ⁸Ask me, and **I will give you the nations as your inheritance**, the ends of the earth as your personal property.’” (vv. 4-8)

We see this decree prophesied throughout the Old Testament and fulfilled throughout the New Testament.²⁴⁸

⁹“You will break them with an iron scepter; you will smash them like a potter’s jar.”²⁴⁹ (v. 9)

²⁴⁵ Cf. Psalm 110:1-2; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 28:18; Luke 1:32-33; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Revelation 11:15, 19:16

²⁴⁶ *“The idiom reflects ancient Near Eastern adoption language associated with covenants of grant, by which a lord would reward a faithful subject by elevating him to special status, referred to as “sonship.” Like a son, the faithful subject received an “inheritance,” viewed as an unconditional, eternal gift. Such gifts usually took the form of land and/or an enduring dynasty. See M. Weinfeld, “The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East,” JAOS 90 (1970): 184-203.” New English Translation (NET)*

²⁴⁷ Cf. Psalm 89:26-27; Matthew 3:17, 17:5; Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5, 5:5.

²⁴⁸ Isaiah 9:6-7, 49:6; Daniel 7:13-14; Zechariah 9:10; Matthew 28:18; Acts 13:33; Ephesians 1:20-22; Revelation 11:15.

²⁴⁹ *“The LXX reads “you will shepherd them.” This reading, quoted in the Greek text of the NT in [Rev 2:27](#); [12:5](#); [19:15](#), assumes a different vocalization of the consonantal Hebrew text and understands the verb as רָעָה (ra‘ah, “to shepherd”) rather than נָפַץ (naḥats, “to break”). But the presence of נָפַץ (nafats, “to smash”) in*

It is written that this too will be fulfilled among the nations of the earth at Christ's return.²⁵⁰ And the following is God's response to the nations of the earth regarding their global agenda:

¹⁰ "So now, you kings, do what is wise; you rulers of the earth, submit to correction. ¹¹ Serve the Lord in fear. Repent in terror. ¹² Give sincere homage. Otherwise, he will be angry, and you will die because of your behavior, when his anger quickly ignites. How blessed are all who take shelter in him!" (vv. 10-12)

Again, in Psalm 2, verse 2, we have a clear picture of Globalism, as well as the spiritual goal of the spiritual powers behind Globalism:

² "The kings of the earth form a united front; the rulers collaborate against the Lord and his anointed king."

the next line strongly favors the MT vocalization. The Hebrew term שֵׁבֶט (shevet) can refer to a "staff" or "rod," but here it probably refers to the Davidic king's royal scepter, symbolizing his sovereignty." New English Translation (NET)

²⁵⁰ Psalm 110:1-2; Isaiah 11:14, 30:14; Micah 5:15; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Revelation 2:27, 12:15, 19:15.

Globalism uses economic and political motivations for uniting the nations of the earth, but the ultimate goal is control in order to harness the nations to the chariot of “the god of this world”²⁵¹ – the archenemy of Christ.

²⁵¹ 2 Corinthians 4:4

Acts 17

“²⁶**He made** from one man **every nation** of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and **the boundaries of their habitation**,²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might feel around for Him and find Him,²⁵² though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His descendants.’” Acts 17:26-28

Here we see that the apostle Paul puts forth the New Covenant worldview – namely, that **God makes nations and appoints their geographical boundaries**. Do “predator” nations respect the national boundaries God has appointed? Of course, not. As the apostle John reminds us, the nations are fallen and “under the control of the Evil One”.²⁵³

But what is God’s intention in this context of separate nation-states?

²⁵² Cf. Psalm 82:5

²⁵³ 1 John 5:19

“That they would seek God, if perhaps they might feel around for Him and find Him.”

Is this referring to *whole* nations finding God and the *whole* populace becoming regenerated by the Holy Spirit? No. God’s plan is:

“A purchased people **from** every tribe, language, people, and nation”²⁵⁴ – “**A chosen people**, a royal priesthood, a holy (*set apart*) nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that they may proclaim the excellencies of Him whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light; for they once were not a people, but now they are the people of God.”²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ Revelation 5:9

²⁵⁵ 1 Peter 2:9-10

Globalism & God

It is plain to see from Scripture that **God has created separate nations and has separated them when they have joined together.** And drawing from the scripture passages we have quoted above, we also have some indication as to God's plan and ultimate purpose on the earth during this age:

The Ecclesia of God

According to Scripture, God has no intention of redeeming the nations of the earth but rather judging the nations,²⁵⁶ and that they would ultimately be utterly destroyed:²⁵⁷

“¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.²⁵⁸ ¹¹Since all

²⁵⁶ Psalm 110:6; Isaiah 66:16; Jeremiah 25:31-33; Joel 3:1-2, 12; Matthew 25:31-32; Acts 17:31; Revelation 20:11-15.

²⁵⁷ Isaiah 24:1, 3, 34:1-2; Zephaniah 3:8; Revelation 19:15.

²⁵⁸ Greek: *katakaio*, Strong's # G2618, “to burn down to the ground”, “to consume wholly”, “burn up utterly”. I am aware of the controversy regarding the alternate translation of the end of v. 10: “... and its works will be discovered”

these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹²looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which **the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!** ¹³But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.” 2 Peter 3:10-13

God’s plan and purpose is that prior to “the day of the Lord”, Jesus would build His Church – specifically by redeeming “a (*one*) holy²⁵⁹ (*set apart*) nation”²⁶⁰ which will consist of people “purchased from every nation”²⁶¹.

In the Old Covenant, God preserved the righteous line - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the nation of Israel - to bring forth the Christ. In the New Covenant, God preserves

instead of "... and its works will be burned up." Since only two out of many manuscripts suggest this reading, and since this reading is quite inconsistent and therefore very problematic to the meaning of the passage, like the majority of Greek scholars, I do not see the necessity for over-spiritualizing the passage to mean that there will be a "renewed" earth instead of a literal "new" earth.

²⁵⁹ Strong’s # G40, *hagios*, “set apart for God”

²⁶⁰ 1 Peter 2:9

²⁶¹ Revelation 5:9. In the Old Covenant, God preserved the righteous line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the nation of Israel, to bring forth the Christ. In the New Covenant, God preserves the righteous line of all those who are in Christ to bring forth the Ecclesia, the Body of Christ.

the righteous line of all those who are in Christ²⁶² to bring forth the Ecclesia, the Body of Christ.

The Greek word, *ekklesia*,²⁶³ meaning “called out” and “gathered together”, is what Jesus said He was building.²⁶⁴ The Ecclesia is a people who are called out of the nations of the world²⁶⁵ and gathered together. Jesus didn’t say He would be redeeming the nations of the world, but rather He would redeem a Remnant from the nations. *That* is God’s plan and purpose.

“You shall be My own possession **from among all the peoples**, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

Exodus 19:5-6

“For you are a **holy** (*set apart*) **people** to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has **chosen you to be a people for His personal possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.**” Deuteronomy 7:6

“The **holy** (*set apart*) **seed** in the stump.” Isaiah 6:13

²⁶² “The Righteousness of God in Christ”: 2 Corinthians 5:21. Cf. Jeremiah 23:5-6; Romans 3:21-22; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Philippians 3:9, and Isaiah 53:11; Romans 5:17-19.

²⁶³ Strong’s # G1577

²⁶⁴ Matthew 16:18

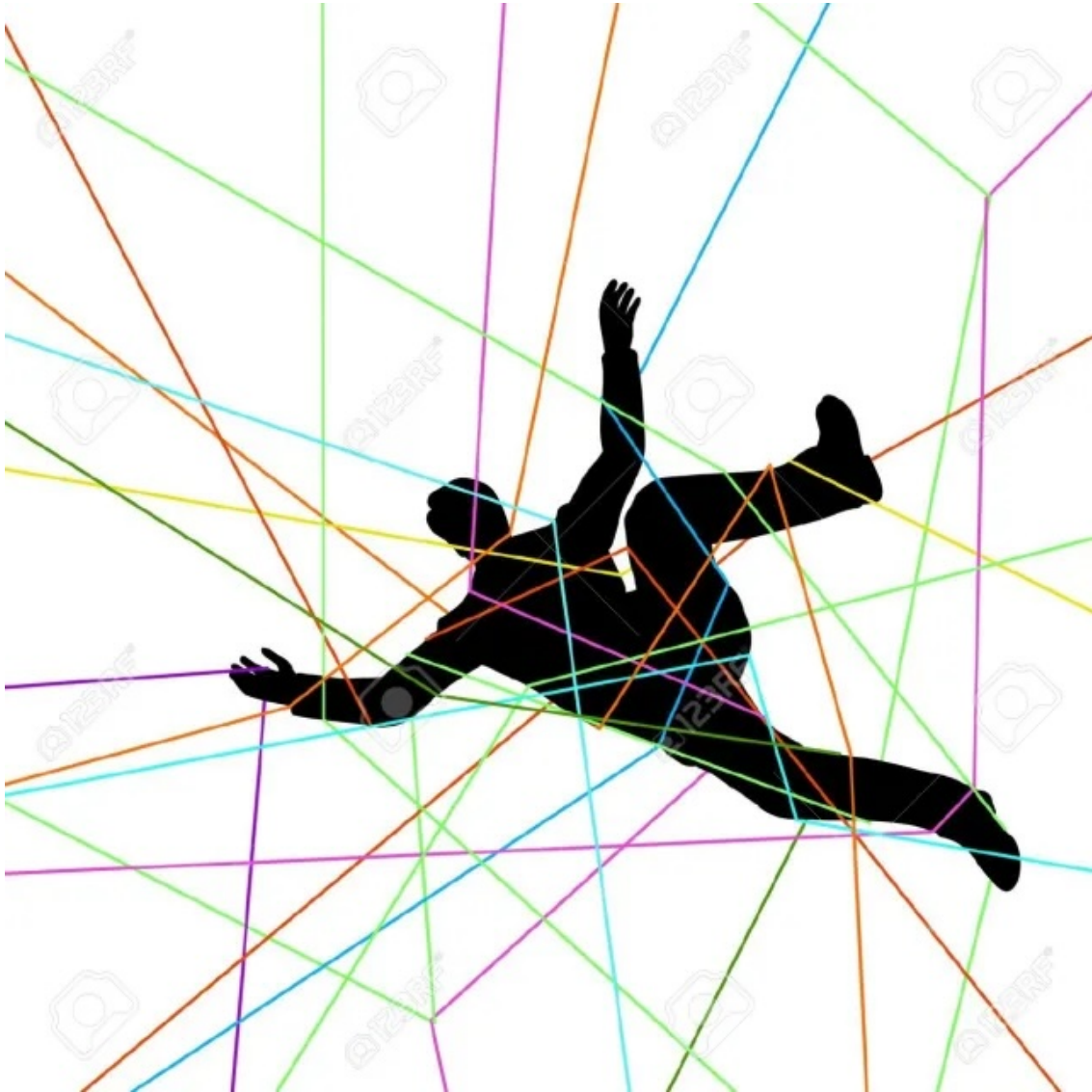
²⁶⁵ John 17:6, 14, 16; Cf. v. 9

“A purchased people from every tribe, language, people, and nation” Revelation 5:9

“A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that they may proclaim the excellencies of Him whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light; for they once were not a people, but now they are the people of God.” 1 Peter 2:9-10²⁶⁶

“The people whom I formed for Myself will declare My praise.” Isaiah 43:21

²⁶⁶ Cf. 2 Kings 14:30-31; Jeremiah 23:3; Ezekiel 6:8-10; Joel 2:32; Micah 5:7-8; Zechariah 13:8-9; Malachi 3:16-18.



Do Not Be Entangled

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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W.D. Furioso, Writer ~ Frances Furioso, Editor

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Preface

The intention and purpose of this article are to remind those who belong to Christ of some basic spiritual realities with regards to the World in which we live, and to bring to our remembrance some realities of the Kingdom of Heaven which may help us to better understand how to maintain our stance of being *“IN the World, Bur Not OF the World”*. (John 17:14-15)²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ I have written in detail on this subject in other articles including [*“The Way of God & The Way of Humanity”*](#), [*“IN the World, Bur Not OF the World”*](#), [*“How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity?”*](#), [*“Concerning Gathering”*](#), and other articles which can be found [HERE](#).

The World System

“The following quote communicates what we must understand about the world in which we live: *“(It is) An ordered world system governed from behind the scenes by Satan. This system encompasses politics, education, literature, science, art, law, commerce, music -- anything involved in the progress of mankind.... No matter how good the initial intentions, all organizations created by mankind eventually turn away from Godly power to worldliness. When the influence of Divine Life is removed, organizations gravitate towards materialism, humanism, worldliness, and Satan.”*²⁶⁸

I have long believed that most Christians are not sufficiently aware of *the spiritual realities behind the World System* in which we live. (I have discussed this issue in detail in [*“Facing the Future”*](#) and [*“Do Not Love the World”*](#).) We need not dedicate ourselves to learning “the deep things of Satan”²⁶⁹, but an understanding of the realities of “the god of this world”²⁷⁰, “the rulers,

²⁶⁸ This quote is from a book summary (not an excerpt) of *“Love Not the World”* by Watchman Nee offered by a Davin Dahlgren. This book, as with his many other books, is actually published from the notes taken by his students during Watchman Nee’s talks (1920-1972).

²⁶⁹ Revelation 2:24

²⁷⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19

the powers, the world forces of this darkness, the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*”²⁷¹, and the operation of the World System on the Earth **serve to help make clear distinctions between the kingdom of the World and the Kingdom of Heaven.** I believe “making no distinction between the holy and the common and having not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean”²⁷² is a fundamental weakness of contemporary Western Christianity.

Firstly, the whole World – including all governments in all nations, regardless of who is president – “lie under the control of the Evil One”.²⁷³ **Scripture tells us we are not dealing with flesh and blood, but with spiritual forces of darkness and evil.**²⁷⁴ These spiritual entities and their material manifestations in human governments and societies truly could not care less about the stopping of killing or the making of peace in the World regardless of any and all political rhetoric and

²⁷¹ Ephesians 6:12

²⁷² Ezekiel 22:26

²⁷³ 1 John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2; Cf. 1 John 2:15-17; Revelation 12:9; James 4:4.

²⁷⁴ Ephesians 6:12

propaganda. In addition to this, the presidents and politicians who are not spiritually regenerated are “ignorant of the schemes of Satan”.²⁷⁵ If they are not spiritually regenerated, there is no way they can even understand what is going on in the spiritual realm²⁷⁶, none-the-less know how to address and handle these things with wisdom. “The weapons of **our** warfare are not carnal.”²⁷⁷ However, the weapons employed by human governments and their politics are merely an arsenal of carnal weapons which are useless against spiritual forces.

It is the fallen state of the human heart which is the cause of all the evil we see in the world. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is incurably sick; who can understand it fully *and* know its secret motives? ... Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in *and* relies on mankind, making [weak, faulty human] flesh his strength, and whose mind *and* heart turn away from the LORD.’”²⁷⁸ The human heart is the battleground, and that is in the spiritual realm, not the

²⁷⁵ 2 Corinthians 2:11; Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6-8; Ephesians 6:11

²⁷⁶ Cf. John 3:3-8

²⁷⁷ Ephesians 6:12

²⁷⁸ Jeremiah 17:9, 5 AMP

political realm. “*Christianized*” legislation of morality does not change hearts.²⁷⁹ And unchanged hearts make for unchanged human behavior and unchanged societies.

As “disciples of the Kingdom”²⁸⁰, we need to remember: “God is Spirit.” His kingdom is in the realm of His Spirit. Jesus Himself made those statements. (John 4:24, 18:36) In accord with the promises of the New Covenant, the “law” of God’s kingdom is written on human hearts and operates “according to the spirit” – not “according to the letter” – specifically, it cannot be legislated in political policies and programs. (2 Corinthians 3:6) The citizenry of God’s kingdom is “*in* the world but not *of* the world” (John 17:14-15). We are individually “strangers and exiles on this earth” (Hebrews 11:13), and collectively an outpost or colony of heaven. Our citizenship is in Heaven (Philippians 3:20), and we are witnesses to a heavenly kingdom which is not “*here*” and not “*there*” (Matthew 24:23) – that is, not established anywhere

²⁷⁹ Cf. Romans 8:3-4

²⁸⁰ Matthew 13:52

here on this Earth in this age, other than in the hearts of people, until the return of our King to a new Earth and a new Heaven. This will, indeed, be a “*new*” Earth, and not a “*renewed*” Earth. There will not be anything on this Earth having been “*renewed*” by the work of Christian ministry or by “*Christianizing*” societies through governmental legislation. Rather, it will be a literal newly created Earth descended from Heaven – at the start of the next age. (2 Peter 3:7-11²⁸¹; Cf. Revelation 21:1-2, 9-11, 23; 22:1-5) I have more fully addressed this issue in [“Your Kingdom Come”](#), pp.13-22.

Secondly, all nations are made up of a majority of people with fallen human natures – be they presidents, politicians, or the general populace. (Romans 3:10-18) It follows that **self-preservation and self-aggrandizement govern all political policies, programs, and interactions.** Scripture identifies this as

²⁸¹ I am aware of the controversy regarding the alternate translation of the end of v. 10: “... and its works will be discovered” instead of “... and its works will be burned up.” Since only two out of many manuscripts suggest this reading, and since this reading is quite inconsistent and therefore very problematic to the meaning of the passage, like the majority of Greek scholars, I do not see the necessity for over-spiritualizing the passage to mean that there will be a “renewed” earth instead of a literal “new” earth.

the cause of all wars. (James 4:1-2) There are no “*holy wars*” or “*just wars*” in the New Testament except for the one going on in the spiritual realm. (Ephesians 6:12; Cf. Daniel 10:13, 12:1; Revelation 12:7) All wars between nations are solely based on what benefits that nation. The same is true of the immigration policies of all nations. Humanitarian goals and world peace are not the ultimate goals of any nation. Every nation is motivated solely by self-preservation and self-aggrandizement. All “*virtue signaling*” is self-serving propaganda – a means to an immoral end.

If one does not want to accept what has been stated above, and prefers to believe that the World in which we live can be transformed by human governments and their politics, or by the work of the Church (Ekklesia)²⁸²,

²⁸² Some thoughts on using the word “Ekklesia”: **Not everyone identifying with the word “church” is part of the Ecclesia of God. There is only one true Church made up of those who have received the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9-10) - those who “possess the Son”.** (1 John 5:11-12) However, contrary to what is in vogue today for some, I make no distinction between the Greek word, ekklesia, and its English translation, “church”. I use the two words interchangeably. If I use the word “church”, I mean the full and accurate biblical meaning of “ekklesia”. Simply using the Greek word, ekklesia, in and of itself, helps no one understand the biblical meaning. **The biblical meaning will always require explanation for the unlearned.** Therefore, I think the English words, “church”, or “assembly”, or “community” are adequate translations. When writing, I sometimes find myself

or by a “*special*” class of Christians called “*the manifested Sons of God*” - *before Christ’s return*, then one must disregard Scripture or come up with some erroneous system of interpretation of Scripture. These erroneous systems of interpretation abound, and every one of them is a misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the Kingdom of Heaven. This, according to Jesus, brings serious doubts as to the spiritual regeneration of the adherents of these erroneous systems of biblical interpretation.

(John 3:3-8)

In any case, this world has been subject to futility.

(Romans 8:20; 2 Peter 3:7, 10-12; Revelation 20:11,

leaning towards using terms like “the people of God”, or “the disciples of the kingdom”, or “the followers of Christ” - depending on the context. Furthermore, not identifying as “Church” does not “automatically” make us the “Ekklesia”. If we are going to identify as the “Ekklesia”, there must be the reality of being and living as “called out” AND “GATHERED TOGETHER” AND ENGAGED IN THE MATTERS OF THE KINGDOM (it’s the latter that is demonstratively lacking today.) Donning the Greek word is duplicitous and inconsistent. If that were the thing to do, why aren’t we using Greek words to communicate 100s of other New Covenant truths? Moreover, don’t the words “congregation” and “assembly” ALSO conjure up images of people sitting in a BUILDING? Doesn’t the term “ekklesia” conjure up the connotation “ecclesiastical” (man-made church systems)? We also have to reckon with Paul’s injunction: “Solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers.” (2 Timothy 2:14) What do we do with that? I think we are still “missing the mark” and “falling short” with all of this.

21:1) Notwithstanding amazing advances in the sciences and technologies, there is no historical precedent upon which to base any hope of Humanity being able to solve its own social-economic-political and moral problems. Expecting improvement by any means is simply foolish thinking, as it is contrary to God's plan. Righteousness and peace have never been established in this world, in this age – and according to Jesus, never will be. (Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51; John 16:33; Cf. Acts 14:22; Revelation 6:4)

Thirdly, one must *“open wide the lens”* when looking at anything taking place in the world. Marx's Dialectical Materialism (the struggle between different social classes) is still very much in force. Also, there is a globalist-nationalist dialectic behind every issue and action taking place in the world. There is a globalist movement which will continue and will increase up to the return of Christ. Naturally, in reaction, there are nationalist counter movements which, at best, may have only temporary “success”. And it must be remembered that nationalist movements – in any nation

under any president - are also “under the sway of the Evil One”. (1 John 5:19)

These realities are in accord with Scripture – regardless of our natural desire to have a pleasant life. Since Humanity’s fall in the Garden, sin and death have ruled throughout all human history in the World System (Genesis 6:5-7), and according to Jesus, this will continue until His return. (Matthew 24:3-22) Until the “Faithful and True” comes again (Revelation 19:11-21; Cf. Psalms 45:3-5, 96:13, 98:9; Isaiah 11:4, 42:13, 63:1-4; Zechariah 14:3-5; Matthew 16:27, 24:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, 2:8; Jude 1:14-15), the world will be under the control of spiritual forces of darkness and wickedness.

The Ways of God & The Ways of Fallen Humanity

Like the wisdom of God, the ways of God are “from above” (James 3:17) – “not of this realm” (John 18:36) - altogether different than the World. There is a passage in the Old Testament which, if read and taken seriously, bears out the ways of God in contrast to the ways of fallen Humanity:

“**13** Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, “Are you for us or for our enemies?” **14 “Neither”** he replied, “but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, “What message does my Lord have for his servant?” (Joshua 5:13-14 NIV)

This is what the Strong's Lexicon has to say about the Hebrew word, *lo* (Strong's # H3808), which is translated "Neither": *"The Hebrew word "לֹ" (lo) is a primary particle of negation. It is used to express a strong denial or prohibition. In the Hebrew Bible, "lo" is often employed to negate verbs, commands, or statements, indicating the absence or opposite of an action or condition. It is a fundamental word in Hebrew, appearing frequently throughout the Old Testament."*

The fact is: God is not on any human "side". It is the responsibility of Humanity to align with God, not vice versa. Spiritual warfare is not being waged in the realm of politics. Political "weapons" may or may not produce some beneficial social outcomes. But history clearly shows that any beneficial social outcomes achieved through political means have been quite short-lived. Kingdom warfare "is not of this realm" (John 18:36). "That which has been born of the flesh (for example, political achievement) is flesh, and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit." What is born of the flesh cannot see or enter into the realm of the Kingdom of God. (John 3:3-8; Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:50) To be engaged in human warfare with human weapons –

namely, politics - is to be “*entangled*” in the earthly dimension,²⁸³ rather than the heavenly dimension.

One may ask: “*What is the harm of investing oneself into the political process to produce beneficial social outcomes? Is it sinful?*” Investing in the political process for social outcomes may not necessarily be sinful, although it very often is. But that is not the point. The point is, for the Christian, being *entangled* in the political process for beneficial social outcomes is wrong in many ways:

- **It is not co-laboring with God.** It is not Scripture, but never-the-less, a line from a Bob Dylan song speaks succinctly: “*Every earthly plan that be known to Man, He is unconcerned. He’s got plans of His own to set up His throne, when He returns.*”²⁸⁴ God is not involved with political process – that is totally a human endeavor. God is involved with His own Kingdom agenda, and the Ekklesia is called to **co-labor *with* Him.** (1 Corinthians 3:9) There are

²⁸³ 2 Timothy 2:4

²⁸⁴ “*When He Returns*”, from “*Slow Train Coming*”, Bob Dylan (1979)

many verses in Scripture warning against acting independently of God - “leaning on our own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5), moving in ways “which seem right, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12). The Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah a very somber warning: “Listen carefully, all you who kindle **your own** fire [devising your own man-made plan of salvation], who surround yourselves with torches, walk by the light of your [self-made] fire and among the torches that **you have set** ablaze. But this you will have from My hand: **You will lie down in [a place of] torment.**” (Isaiah 50:11 AMP)

- **Misplaced glory**: If there are any beneficial social outcomes, it is the government, the president, the incumbent political party, and its politicians who take the glory. The Ekklesia should be doing things “*in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ*”. That name carries the authority of the Kingdom of Heaven, and it is that name which receives glory.
- **Misplaced faith**: “Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.” (Psalm 146:3

NIV)²⁸⁵ Those outside of Christ have no other option but “*the arm of the flesh*”.²⁸⁶ Their only hope is Humanism. The only process available to them is the political process. **It is assumed that the political process is the only way to address and meet the needs of Humanity.** This makes perfect sense, if one doesn’t believe in Christ. But it makes no sense for the Christian believer to put faith in the political process instead of the Spirit of the Living God. And it must be remembered that **God does not involve Himself in the political process**, as was established in Joshua 5:13-14. The problem is that most Christians do not believe this is true. They believe God serves human government instead of the government serving God. The result is Christians serving human government instead of serving God. This belies their faith – their faith is in human government and

²⁸⁵ Cf. Psalm 118:8-9; Isaiah 2:22, 30:1-3, 31:1; Jeremiah 17:5

²⁸⁶ 2 Chronicles 32:8

the political process, instead of the Spirit of the Living God.

- **Abdication of Divine Calling:** When Jesus said to “Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.” (Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25), He was referring to tax money. But the tax money was to be used as God has ordained human government to use it – specifically for protection and punishment – not for meeting the material needs of society. (Romans 13:1-7) God gave the responsibilities of Charity to families and the Church. However, both families and the Church have to a great extent abdicated what God has called them to do by looking to human government to fulfill their calling of educating their children, feeding the poor, caring for the elderly, widows, and orphans, healing the sick and broken-hearted. In this, the Church has “*gone the way of the World*” and is at odds with their King and His Righteousness – namely, at odds with how

God has chosen to accomplish His Righteousness
in His Kingdom.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ I have also written on these things in [*"The Root Problem with 'Progressive Christianity'"*](#) and [*"Concerning Gathering", Part 2, The Commission of the Church.*](#)

His Kingdom & His Righteousness

In Matthew 6:33, Jesus instructed us to “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.” How does the Lord accomplish His righteousness in His Kingdom? Jesus spoke of the nature of the affairs of the Kingdom of Heaven, including its life, warfare, and weapons in His parables. While it is not within the scope of this article to fully interpret Jesus’ parables, we can consider one parable which I believe contains the answer to the question “*How does the Lord accomplish His righteousness in His Kingdom?*”

The Parable of the Sower

“³And He told them many things in parables, saying, ‘Behold, the Sower went out to sow; ⁴and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and they sprang up immediately, because they had no depth of soil. ⁶But after the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. ⁸But others fell on the good soil and

yielded a crop, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times as much. ⁹The one who has ears, let him hear.” Matthew 13:3-9

The Parable of the Sower Explained

“¹⁸Listen then to the parable of the Sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears **the word of the kingdom** and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one sown with seed beside the road. ²⁰The one sown with seed on the rocky places, this is the one who hears **the word** and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution occurs because of the word, immediately he falls away. ²²And the one sown with seed among the thorns, this is the one who hears **the word**, and the anxiety of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²³But the one sown with seed on the good soil, this is the one who hears **the word** and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times as much.” Matthew 13:18-23

Again, we are not giving a full interpretation of all that is contained in the parable, but just looking for the answer to the question, “*How does the Lord accomplish His*

righteousness in His Kingdom?” Jesus gives us His answer: The Lord accomplishes His righteousness in His Kingdom by **“the word” – “the word of the Kingdom”** – by the preaching of the **“gospel of the Kingdom”** (Matthew 24:14; Cf. Mark 16:15) *“For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of **the message preached** to save those who believe.”* (1 Corinthians 1:21) **Yes, it is the word of the Lord transforming the hearts of human beings – *not the enactment and enforcement political policies and programs* – which He has chosen to accomplish His righteousness in His Kingdom.**²⁸⁸

There is another aspect of the Kingdom of Heaven we can see in this parable. God’s method and the Kingdom results are different from Humanity’s method and political results: With the preaching of “the word of the Kingdom”, some have “ears to hear”, some don’t. And there are also differences in the amount of fruit

²⁸⁸ Again, I have written more on “His Kingdom & His Righteousness” in [“The Root Problem with ‘Progressive Christianity’”](https://www.AtChristsTable.org)

produced in the outcomes - some 0, some 100-fold, some 60-fold, and some 30-fold.²⁸⁹

In contrast to God's ways, with politics there is universal enforcement of law – *“obey the law, or go to jail”* – *“no one is above the law”*, etc. Obviously, God expects everyone in His Kingdom to endeavor to keep the law of His Kingdom – *“the Law of Christ”*. (1 Corinthians 9:21, Galatians 6:2; Romans 8:2) But how does God govern those outside His Kingdom – on this Earth, here and now? He uses no *“sword”* to enforce His law on those who have not yet received His Spirit, *“⁷because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, **for it is not even able to do so,** ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”* (Romans 8:7-8)

I have written at length about [*“How Does God Govern Fallen Humanity”*](#), but, for here, this excerpt may suffice:

“Every human being is free to make choices and live with the consequences of their choices. This is the type of context God establishes with humanity in the Old Testament, but it is

²⁸⁹ Cf. *“The Parable of the Weeds Among Wheat”* in Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, and *“The Parable of the “Dragnet”*, Matthew 13:47-50.

also the same in the New Testament: ‘I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse, so, choose life that you may live.’” (Deuteronomy 30:19; Cf. vv. 15-20) This is the context which God Himself establishes for humanity at large.”

God has no “enforced legislation” – not for those in the Kingdom, nor for those outside His Kingdom. Again, the way of God is the working of His Spirit through Spirit-in-breathed words **transforming the hearts of human beings** – *not the enactment and enforcement of political policies, programs, and legislation*. This is how He has chosen to accomplish His righteousness in His Kingdom.

An Apostolic Exhortation

“No one engaged in warfare **entangles** himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.” 2 Timothy 2:4

“Entangled”

What does it mean to be “entangled” in the affairs of this life? Strong’s Lexicon gives us these insights:

*“Usage: The verb “emplekó” is used metaphorically in the New Testament to describe becoming entangled or involved in something, often with a negative connotation. It suggests being caught up or ensnared in **affairs that distract or hinder one’s primary focus or mission.***

Cultural and Historical Background:** In the Greco-Roman world, the concept of being entangled was often associated with being caught in a net or snare, a common metaphor for being trapped or hindered. **This imagery would have been familiar to early Christians, who lived in a society where military service and civic duties could easily distract from spiritual commitments.

“The Affairs of this Life”

Is Paul saying that we should not be responsibly engaged in the affairs of our family and household? If so, he would be contradicting much of what he wrote in his epistles. (1 Timothy 5:8; Cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12) Universally speaking we all need to work in order to support and give good oversight to our families and households. We can understand these things as “a garden” God which places us in with the responsibility to “cultivate and tend” – to “be fruitful and multiply”. (Genesis 2:15; 1:28)

Yet, the Lord says, “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you.”. (Matthew 6:33) In a manner of speaking, *at the top of a list* of all “*the affairs of this life*” are “the kingdom of God and His righteousness”. Each of us needs to learn how to maintain that priority uniquely in our own lives before the Lord.

We can also consider the meaning of “the affairs of this life” more specifically in the context of this passage in

2nd Timothy. Paul's reference to "a soldier engaged in warfare" is the key to understanding Paul's probable intention here. And again, Strong's Lexicon is helpful:

"Affairs that distract or hinder one's primary focus or mission.... This imagery would have been familiar to early Christians, who lived in a society where military service and civic duties could easily distract from spiritual commitments."

So, as followers of Jesus Christ, what is our "*top priority - primary focus or mission*" in life? **The affairs of the Kingdom of God** – "Seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness". (Matthew 6:33)

The Affairs of Kingdom of Heaven

Jesus defined the Kingdom of God as the Father's will being done here on earth as it is in Heaven. (Matthew 6:10) But, who is capable of doing God's will? His "*called out ones*" (the Ekklesia) – not the general populace. Scripture tells us: "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) This "faith" is definitive of the Ekklesia of Christ. Again, Scripture tells

us: “The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for **it is not even able to do so**, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:7-8) There are two kingdoms – the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of this World. And there are two different groups of people: There are those who, by faith, have been “*born from above*”, have seen and entered the Kingdom of Heaven (John 3:3-8), and endeavor to walk by faith in order to please Him. And then there are those who are outside the faith, have not been born from above, cannot see or enter the Kingdom, and live according to the flesh. (Romans 8:5; Cf. Ephesians 2:3; 1 John 2:15-16) Who is capable of “*His righteousness*”? Only those who “belong to Christ” (Romans 8:9), who through faith have access to the righteousness of Christ the King. (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:22, 10:4 & 6; Philippians 1:11, 3:9)

So many Christians do not understand that on this Earth, during this age, the affairs of the Kingdom of Heaven take place “in the Spirit” as well as in and through those who are “*born of the Spirit*” – namely,

those who *“belong to Christ”* (Romans 8:9-10) – the Ekklesia He is building. The general populace with its human government and politics is *“in the flesh”* which is *“hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for **it is not even able to do so**, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”* (Romans 8:7-8) They are unable to see, enter, or participate in the affairs of the Kingdom of Heaven – namely walking in faith, pleasing God, doing His will, clothed in His righteousness in Christ Jesus. There are two separate peoples and two separate kingdoms – irrespective of whatever morality is legislated and enforced by the human government and politics of the general populace. The New Covenant operates *“by the Spirit, not by the letter”*. (2 Corinthians 3:6) **A new heart and spirit – not new legislation - is required for living in the Kingdom of God:**

“²⁶ Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My ordinances and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27 AMP)

Christians Live in Babylon, Not the “Promised Land”

The social order of Old Testament Israel is according to the Old Covenant which is now obsolete. (Hebrews 8:13) Israel, like most ancient societies, was a “*sacral*” society – that is, one land, one nation, governed by one God and one religion. (*“Sacralism represents the fusion of church and state power, promoting a system where religious and political authority are intertwined.”*)²⁹⁰ God gave Israel an allotment of land which came to be known as “*The Promised Land*”. In contrast, the New Covenant established by Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection includes **all nations and all forms of social order**, yet is “⁴one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:4-6)

The Church (Ekklesia) is universal – that is, it is not limited to any one nation. That alone precludes the idea of any one nation being a “*Promised Land*”. That whole perspective in all of its variant forms is adeptly

²⁹⁰ <https://www.monergism.com/sacralism>

addressed in Greg Boyd's [*"The Myth of a Christian Nation"*](#). Babylon (Revelation 17) represents the spirit of the World System (Ephesians 2:2) which is worldwide – in the spiritual realm. The Kingdom of Heaven is also worldwide. Jesus warned of the deception of believing the Kingdom of God is "*here*" or "*there*". (Matthew 24:23; Cf. John 18:36) On this Earth, during this age, the "*Promised Land*", so to speak, is also "*in the Spirit*".

"²² You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, ²³to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant." (Hebrews 12:22-24)

We are exhorted by Paul: "¹Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking **the things that are above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on **the things that are above**, *not on the things that are on earth.*" (Colossians 3:1-2)

Kingdom Warfare

There is “a battle in heaven” (Revelation 12). There is warfare between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the World. Scripture – not Political Science, but Scripture - defines the nature of this warfare:

“For our struggle is *not against flesh and blood*, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the **spiritual forces** of wickedness **in the heavenly places**.” (Ephesians 6:12)

“³For though we walk in the flesh, **we do not wage battle according to the flesh**, ⁴**for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh**, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵We are destroying arguments and all arrogance raised against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”

(2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

And as Paul indicates, this is *a spiritual warfare with spiritual weapons* – not human warfare with human weapons:

“¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is **not against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, **against the spiritual forces** of wickedness in the heavenly places.¹³Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Ephesians 6:10-17)

The Weapons of Our Warfare are Not Worldly Weapons

I have written at length about the negative spiritual realities behind the World System. All of this is not to say that Christians should be ambivalent about godliness in the human sphere. *We are to love truth*

and righteousness and hate sin. That is not “*up for debate*”. **The issue is how does the Lord accomplish His righteousness.** *That is to be our “modus operandi”* as well. But unfortunately, what typifies the contemporary Christian approach is taking the side of “*the lesser of two evils*”, investing time, money, and effort into political parties and policies which *appear* to lean more towards godliness in comparison to the other.²⁹¹ I ask you: “*Does that sound like the way of God to you? Can you imagine Jesus and His disciples adopting that methodology? Do you see any evidence of that in the gospels or epistles?*” “This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.” (James 3:15) That is the way of fallen Humanity. “The wisdom of this world is foolishness in the sight of God.” (1 Corinthians 3:19) “The way of the Lord is perfect.” (Psalm 18:30; 2 Samuel 22:31)

²⁹¹ By far, the best writing I have ever come across on the subject of the social ministry of the Church is “*Social Action Jesus Style*” by Larry Christenson. One of the “take aways” I received from this book is this: The Church is to be “a Servant Church”. But it is not the “servant” of the world – it is the “servant” of God. The Church has had the tendency to take its leading from the world regarding its involvement in social issues – that is, jumping on whatever “band wagon” that is determined to be “in vogue” for the expediency of the political climate and agendas at any given time. This can leave other social issues, which are just as worthy, totally unaddressed. Rather, the Church should be *led by the Spirit* in its mission and ministries. And the leading of the Spirit will always be in alignment with the Lord’s Commission of the Church to Represent the King and His Kingdom.

“Out of the Fire”

A Prophetic Word

September 2020

A little more than 40 years ago, while reading the scriptures, I had a very brief vision : The “*canvas*” was entirely black. Then out of the blackness, bright golden specs jumped into the center of the picture. This continued until the center had grown into a shining golden sphere. The understanding that immediately came to me was this: *In “latter times”, people would be “jumping” out of the world into the Household of God.* This vision took place just before or just after reading Jude 1:23.

More recently, the same verse - Jude 1:23 – was placed on my heart and mind, along with an instruction or direction from the Holy Spirit, which I’d like to share.

“And some, save (or deliver) by seizing (or snatching) them out of the fire, detesting (disdaining or hating) even the garment that has been polluted by the flesh (or fallen human nature).” Jude 1:23 AMP

The Spiritual Context

The World is “*on fire*” – the political sphere is riddled with “*fires*” continually springing up all over the earth. Human governments are constantly working to “*put out the fires*” of social issues and political unrest, but **there is no end to these “*fires*”**. At the same time, Christians have become more and more **involved (“*entangled*”)** trying to address these “*fires*” – the ills of fallen Humanity. Contrary to the “*spiritual weapons*” used by the apostle Paul, Christians are predominately and increasingly aligning themselves with various political personalities, parties, policies, and programs in an effort to address these “*fires*”.

The Instruction of the Spirit

“¹⁴Do not be mismatched²⁹² with unbelievers; for what do righteousness and lawlessness share together, or what does light have in common with darkness? ¹⁵Or what harmony does Christ have with Belial²⁹³, or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? ¹⁶Or what

²⁹² Literally, “unevenly yoked”

²⁹³ Greek: *Beliar*, a name of the devil and the antichrist

agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.”

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

There can be no “fellowship” – no partnership – with light and darkness. Our **involvement** is to be with the Kingdom of God – **not** with the World System. Know this: The World system is **not** going to be “redeemed” but rather burned up in the fire of God. (2 Peter 3:7, 10-12; Revelation 20:11, 21:1) This world has been subject to futility. (Romans 8:20) Expecting moral improvement in the political area is simply foolish thinking, as it is contrary to God’s plan. Peace has never been in this World and, according to Jesus, never will be. (Matthew 10:34; Luke 12:51; John 16:33; Cf. Acts 14:22; Revelation 6:4) It is **not** God’s agenda to transform the World System into the Kingdom of God. It is God’s agenda to have the Church (Ekklesia) witness to and be a witness to – that is, “to make known” (Ephesians 3:10) – the Kingdom of God as **an alternate society** – a light in the midst of the darkness.

The Direction for Those Who Belong to Christ

Firstly, **“come out”**,²⁹⁴ and **stop involvement with the World System** – with a healthy fear and disdain of its spiritual pollution.

Secondly, **align yourselves and your energies with God’s agenda**: preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, make Disciples of the Kingdom, be a collective witness of the Kingdom of Heaven, and thus “save some – seizing (or snatching) them out of the fire” through the power of the Word and the Spirit of God.

And thirdly, implied in Jude 1:23 is that **our focus as the people of God is to be the building up of the Ekklesia** – not transforming the World System.

As the World burns, *some* will also “*come out*” of the flames into the Household of God. Therefore, we are **IN**, but not **OF** the World. We are **INVOLVED** with “some snatched from the fire”, but not the World

²⁹⁴ *Ek* (out of) *kaleo* (to call): “a called-out assembly” or “an assembly of called-out ones.”

System. We belong to Christ – our citizenship is in heaven. We are sojourners in this World System – **not involved** in its politic. In a manner of speaking, we can be likened to are “*Conscientious Objectors to Politics*” – “*Political Atheists*”.

I believe this prophetic word is very much in sync with the series of messages I wrote a few years ago: [“A Remnant Will Return”](#). The key scripture passage there, Isaiah 8, portrays ancient Israel in the same situation as ourselves today – [“IN the World, But not OF the World”](#). And the following verses give God’s instruction to His people in that spiritual and political environment:

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait for the LORD who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; I will even look eagerly for Him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.” Isaiah 8:16-18

But there is something more: I see in the words: “*Save others, snatching them out of the fire...*” and “*Bind up the*

testimony, seal the law among my disciples...” something to do with the formation of intentional Christian communities functioning independent of the World System in various ways – alternate societies which “*are for signs and wonders*” – that is, these **family-based / household-based communities** would be witnesses to the Oikos (Household) of God in a post-Christian world. Some of what I am seeing is rooted in a message I published quite a few years ago: [“Facing the Future”](#). And although I continue to seek more insight and understanding, more recently, I have written more on this subject in: [“Kingdom Households”](#). The books I have mentioned (and others) are available in paperback format [HERE](#).

Bill & Frances Furioso

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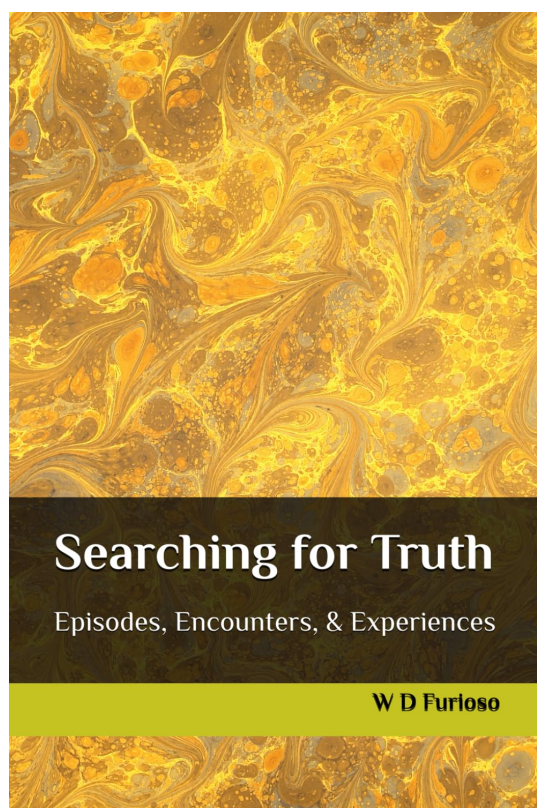
Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, disciplined many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet... www.AtChristsTable.org

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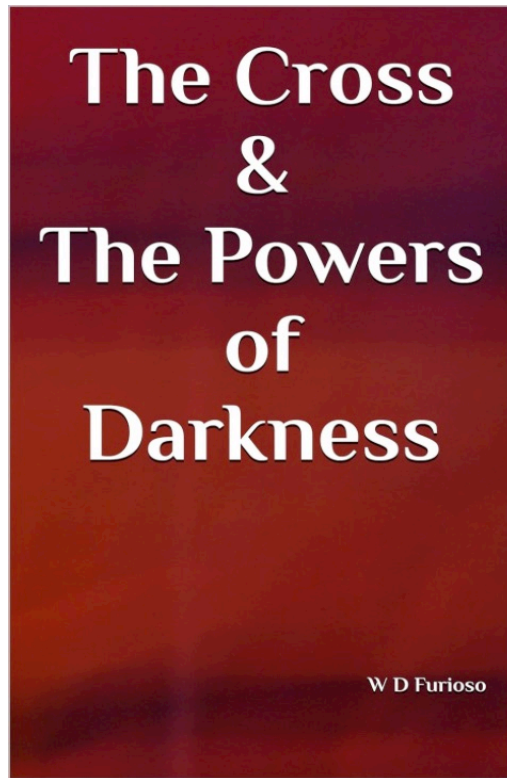


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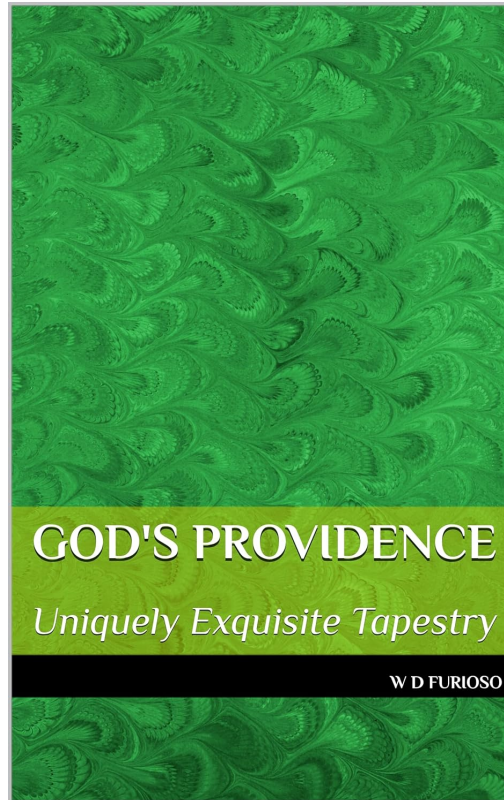


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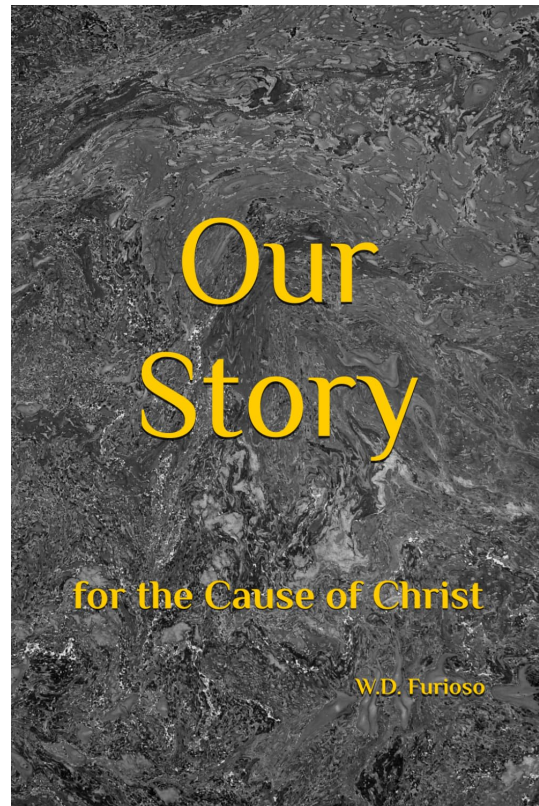


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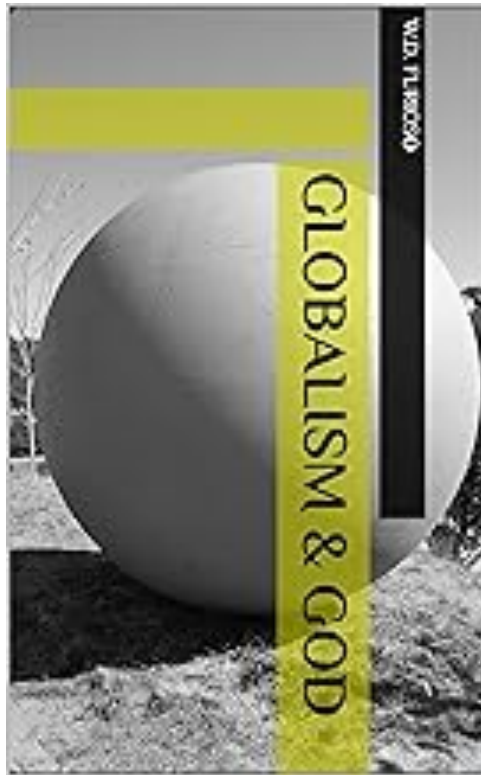


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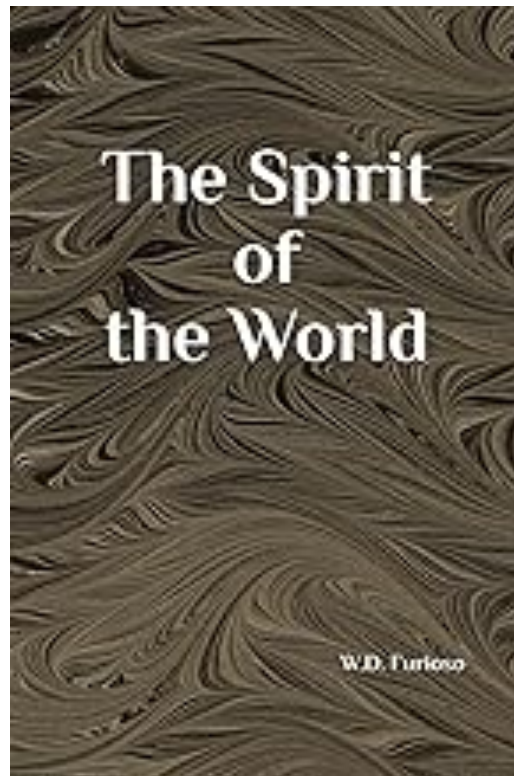


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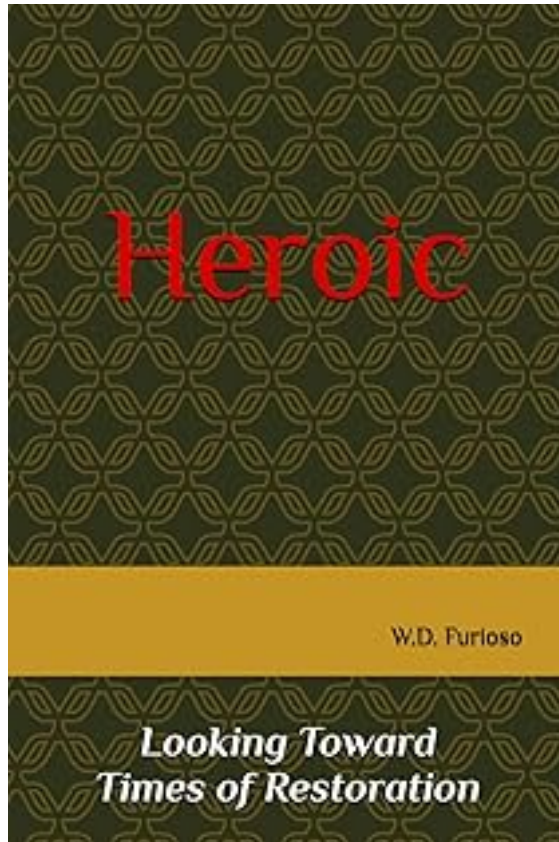


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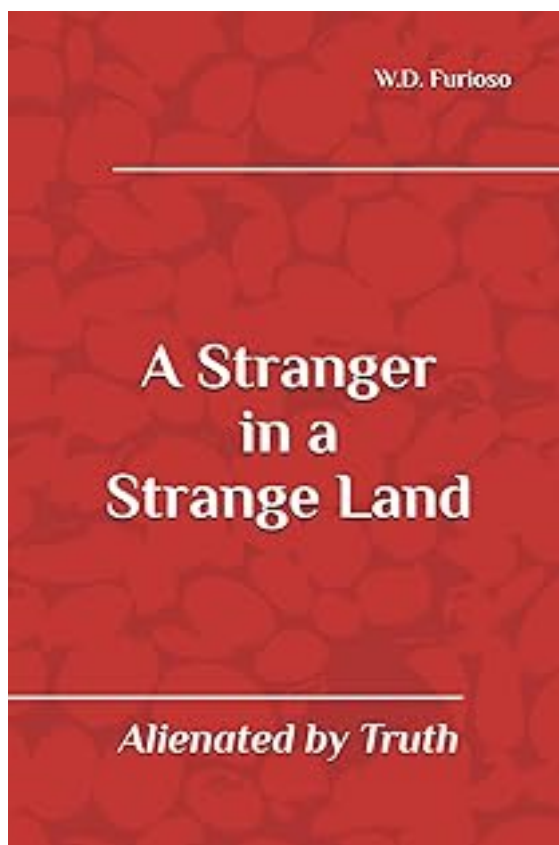


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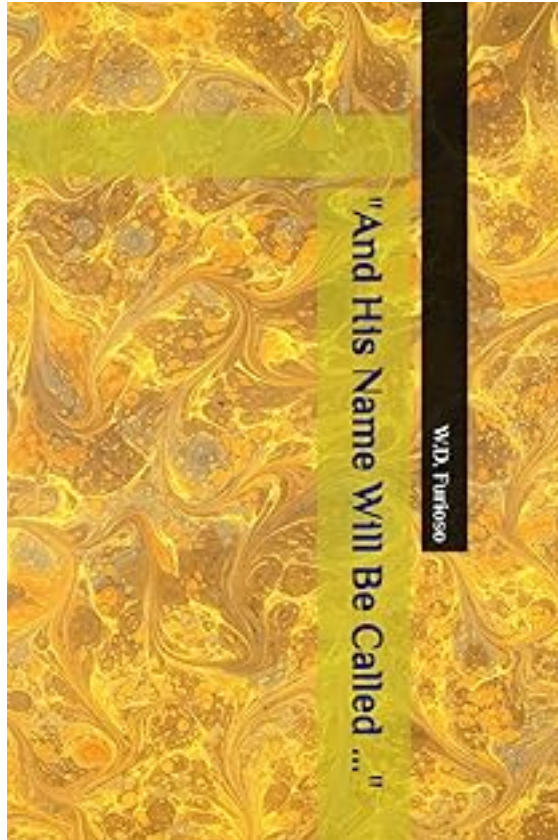
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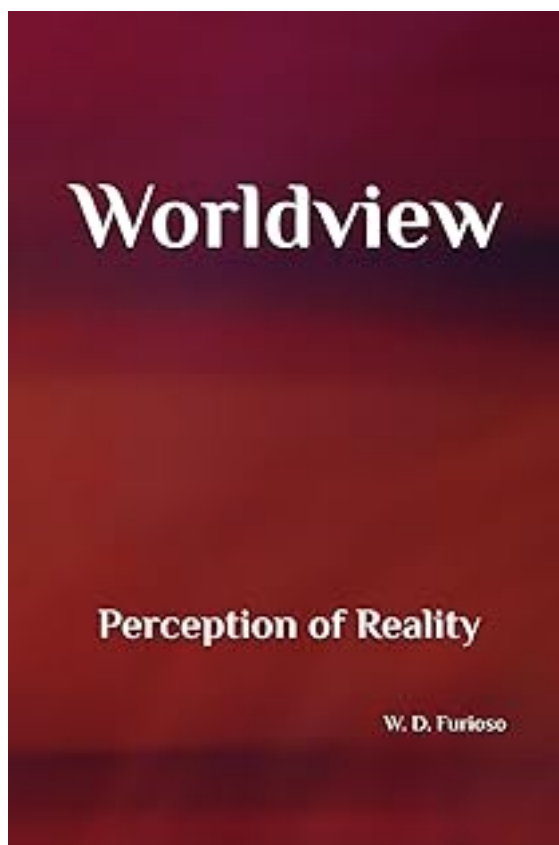


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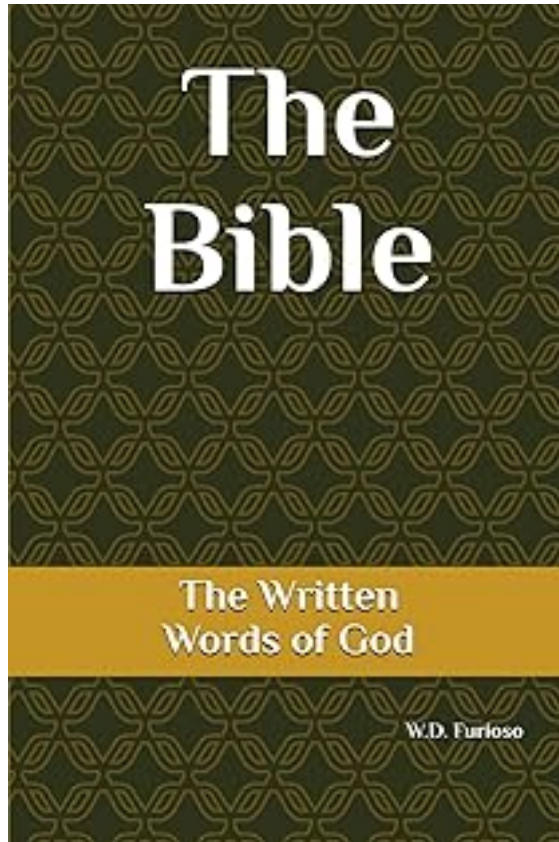
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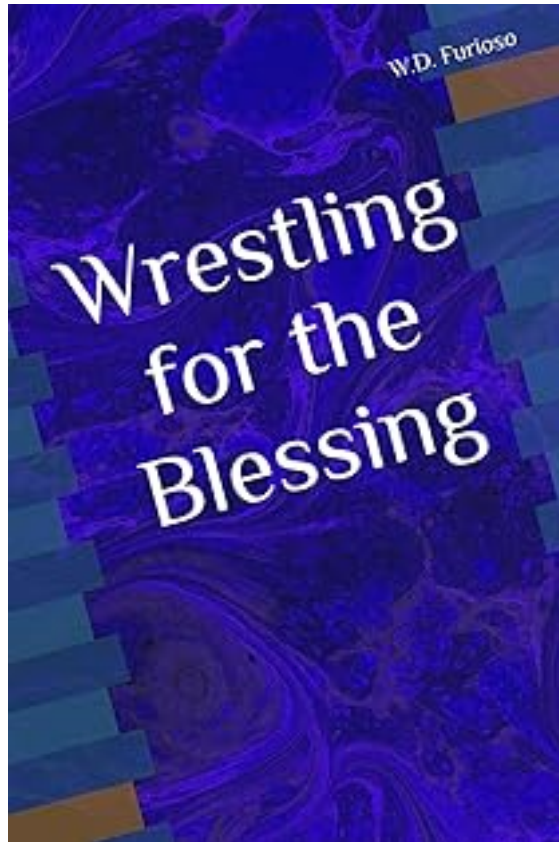
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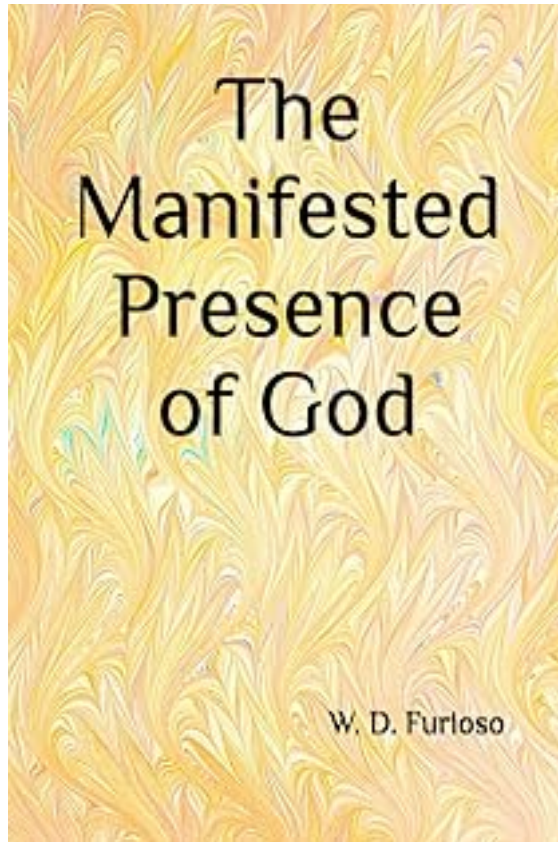


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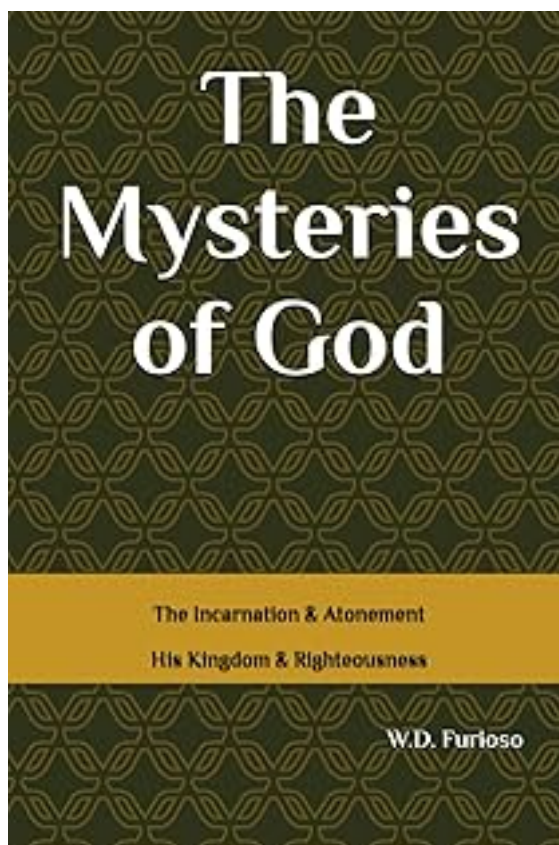


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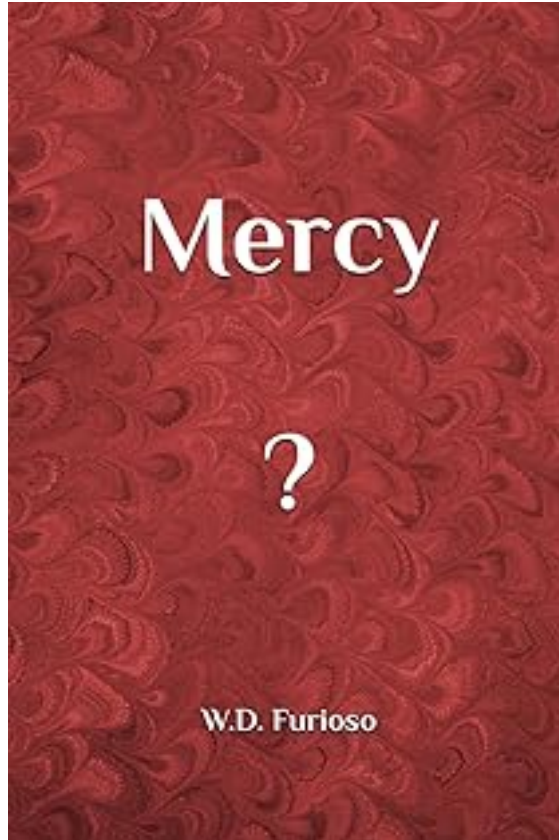
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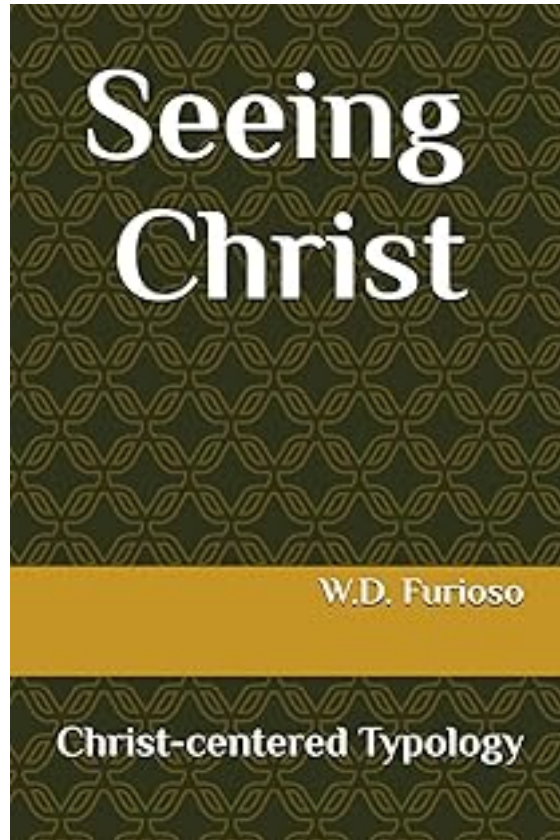


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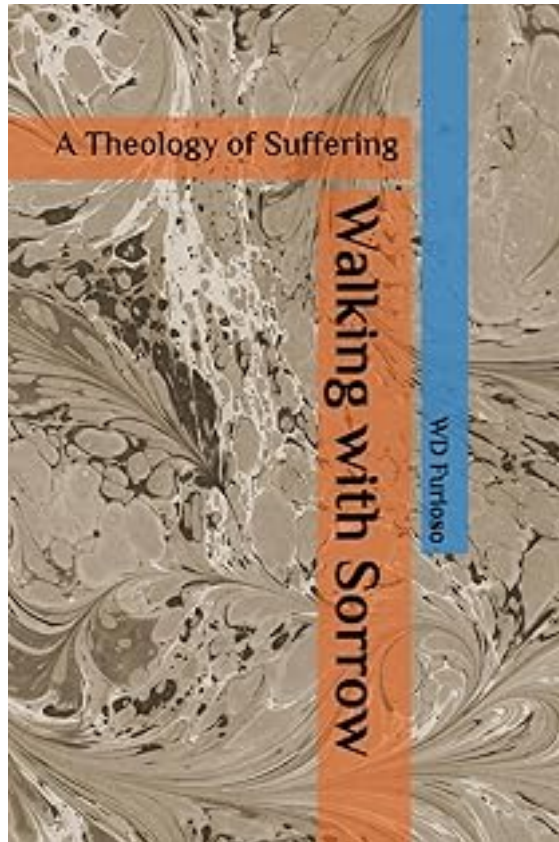
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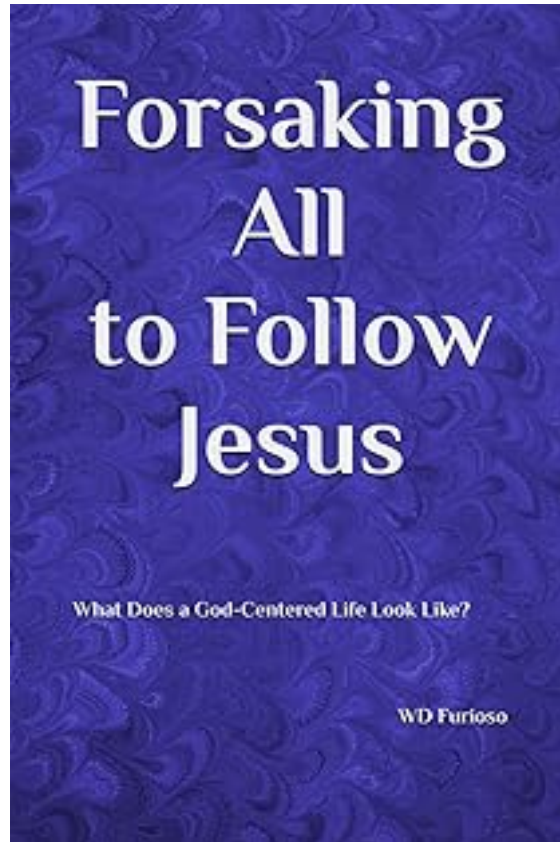


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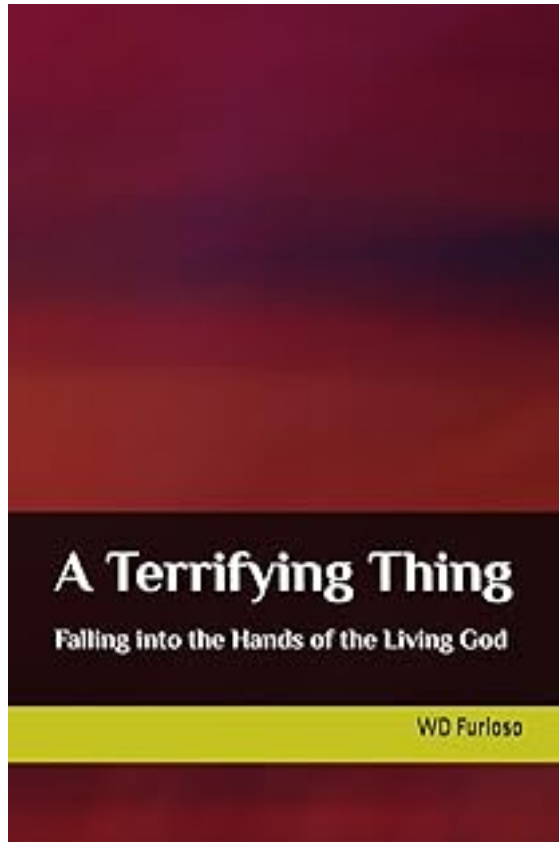
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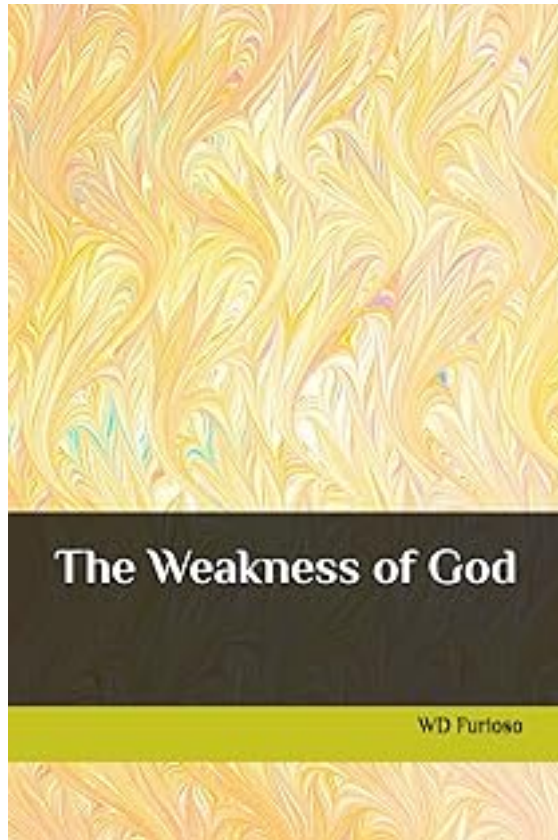


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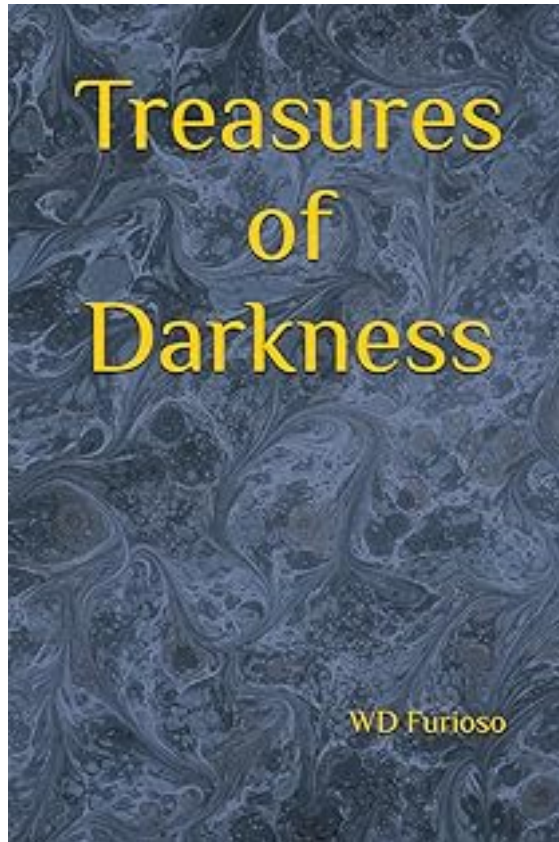


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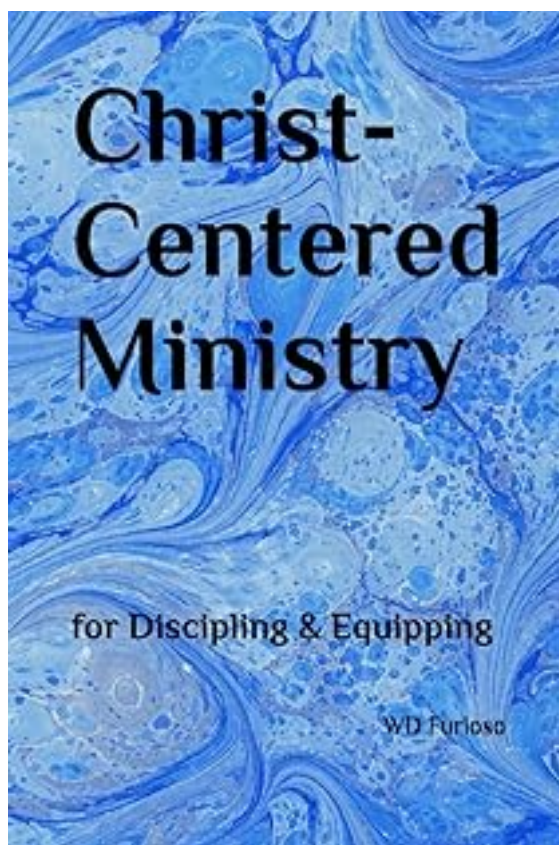


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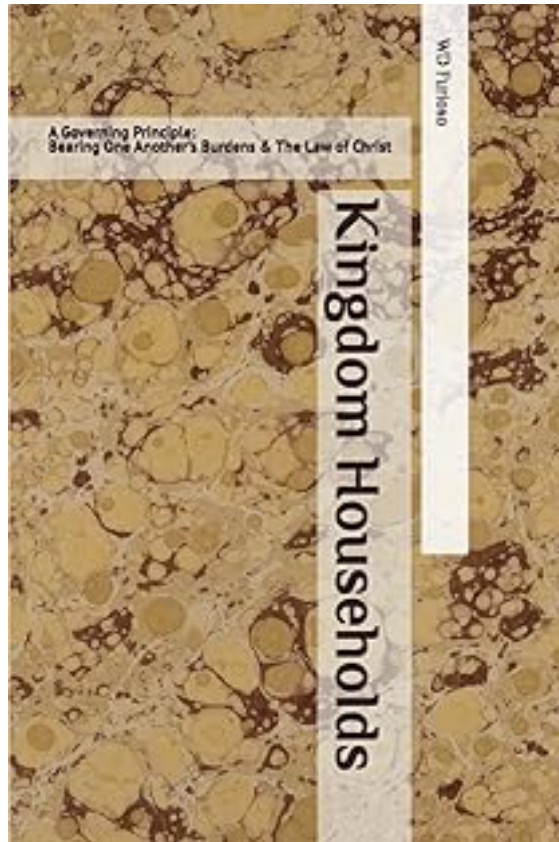
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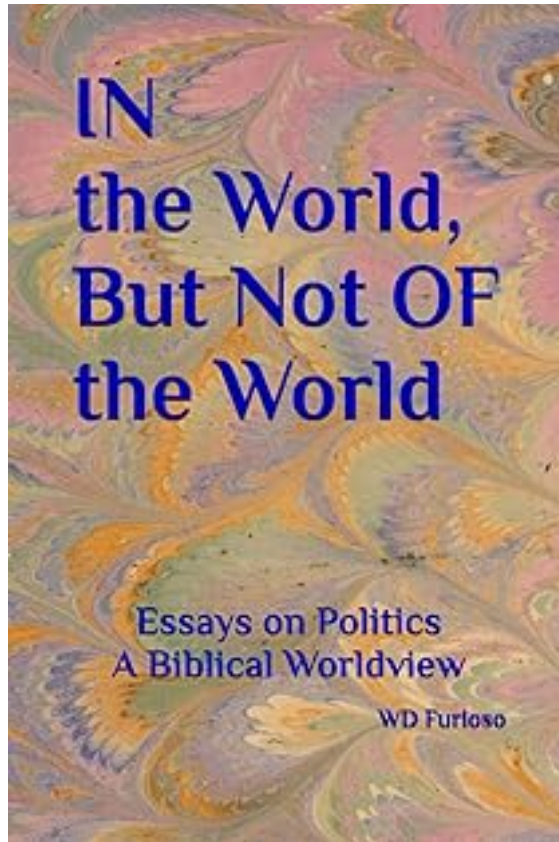
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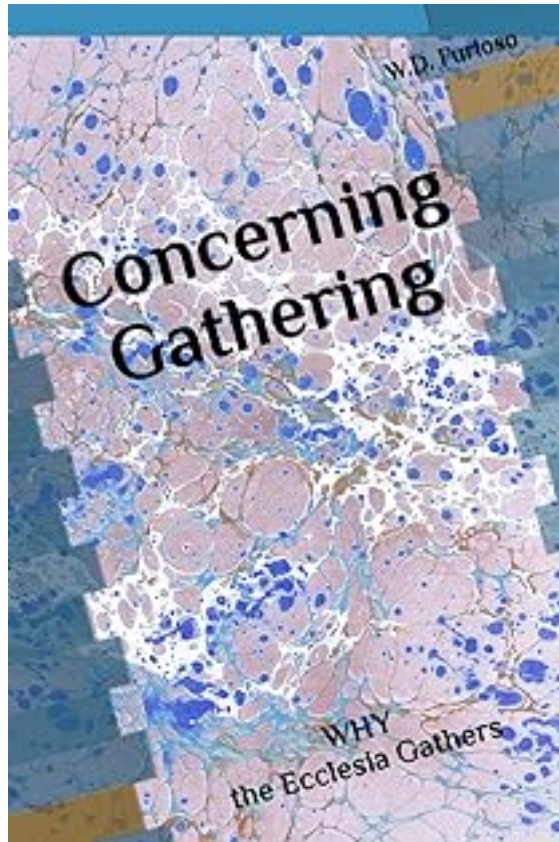
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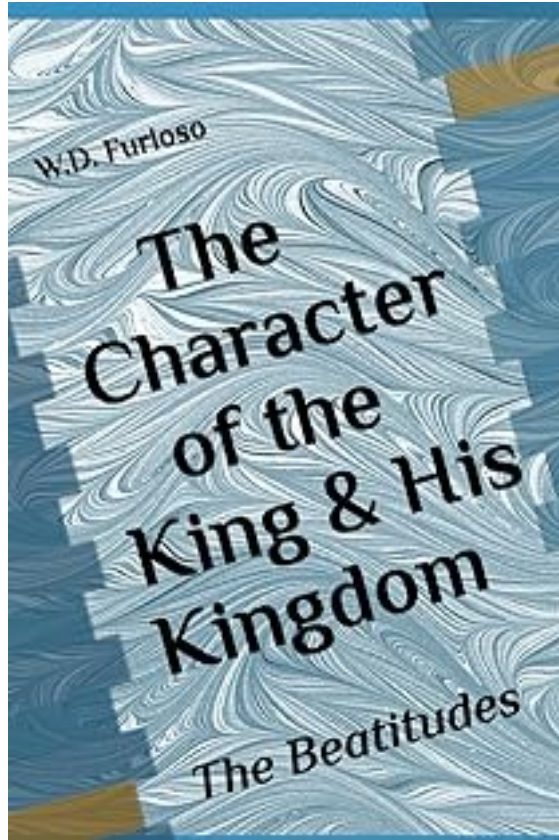
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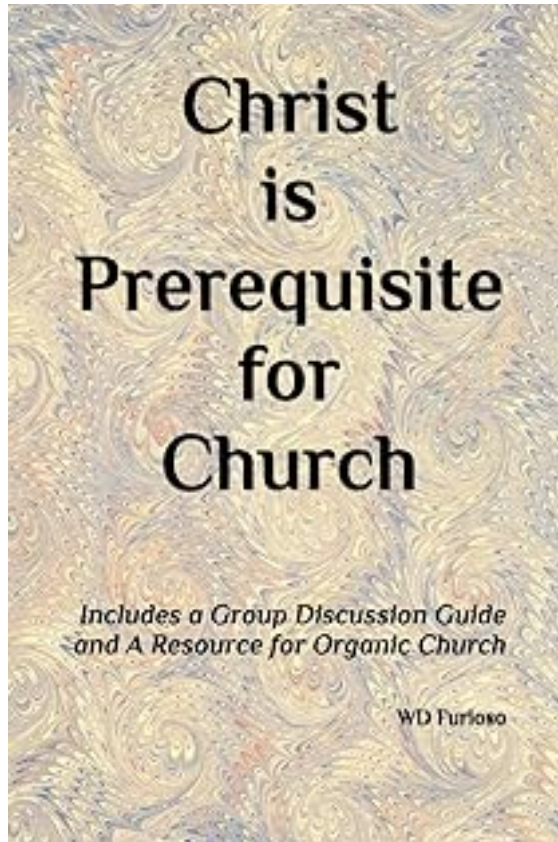


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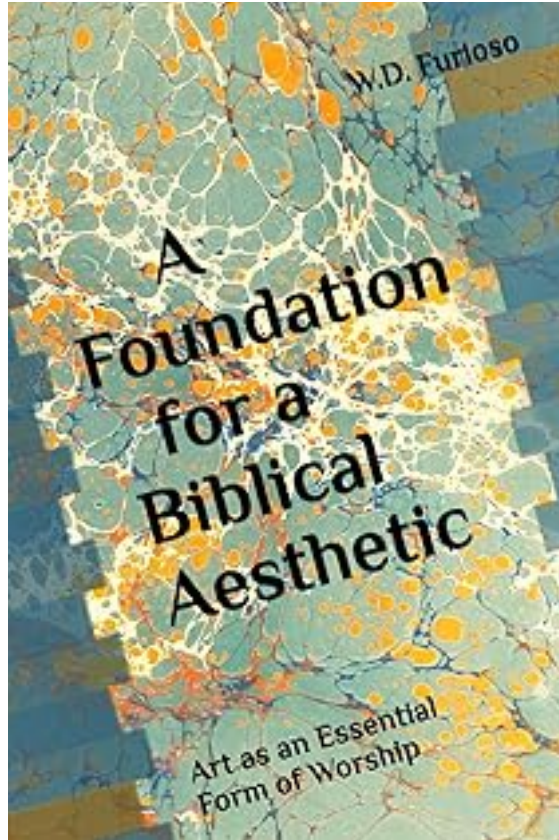
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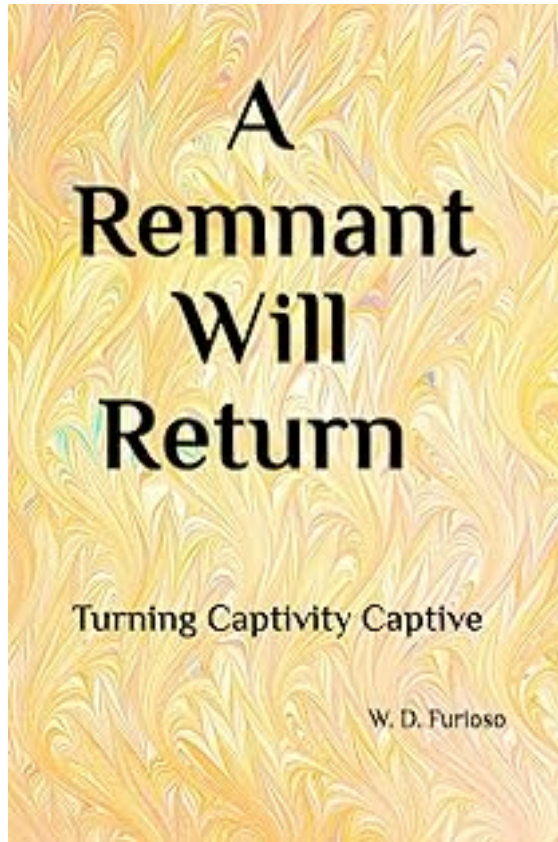
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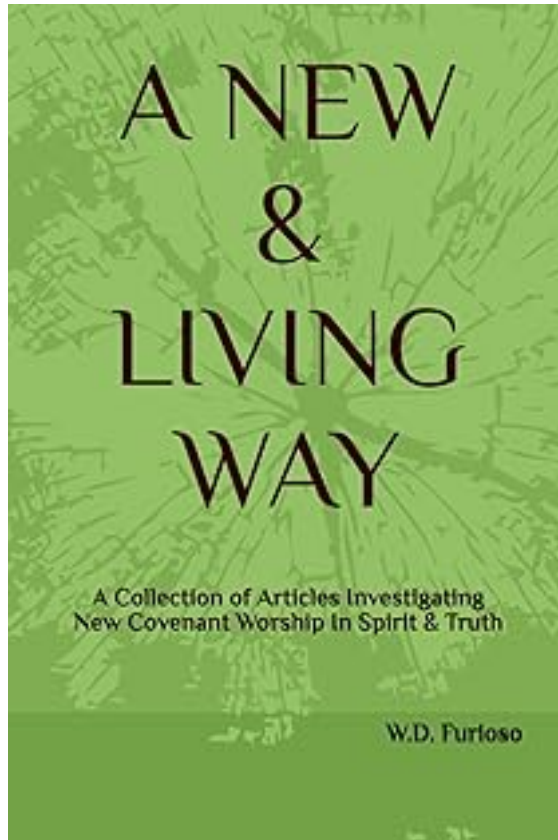
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