

*I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God IN KING JESUS.* (Philippians 3:14)

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### ***Kingdom of God: Authority and Government***

After reading several online biblical articles on authority, I recognize that my view of the subject is not mainstream by any stretch. For starters, you might want to read a piece I recently posted titled [Authority: Life and Truth](#).

Some might wonder if I have a problem with authority, especially submitting to it. In some respects, this is a fair assessment, but not in the negative way most might frame it. My challenge over the concept of authority is an outgrowth of observation and experience that has shown me that our whole notion of authority is based on how we have been trained to view it from the eyes of fallen man. As I recently wrote a friend and brother in Christ: **we need revelation of authority as life and truth**, and this requires that we look beyond the earthly concept of authority which is power and control over others. This is what the above link is about.

To be clear, God's authority, as well as His Son's authority, is absolute; no challenge there. They hold [Creator's Rights](#) over their entire creation. However, when it comes to man's authority—both in the world and in the church (I make no distinction between the two)—it is not. As taught by many, this is called *delegated authority*. Unfortunately, whether recognized or not, many acquiesce to this delegated authority as if it is absolute; a fact borne out today as we see millions go along with the totalitarian plans of the ruling class. After all, doesn't the ruling class, especially those elected to office from among the masses, know what is best for everyone? Not in the least!

To be clear; authority is necessary in a fallen world as a means to keep flawed humans in check. But here is the problem: the one's keeping others in check are flawed just as much, if not more so (in many cases, especially in the political realm and not excepting the faith-leader realm). The result is that the concept of authority itself that most acquiesce to is flawed. In other words, we all have a distorted view of authority that we learn very early in life that sticks with us throughout our life. And, it should not surprise us that many are harmed and damaged in many ways by this authority. If you doubt this, then I suggest you consider what is happening in the world at this very moment. And, let us not leave out what goes on in the nominal church.

So, again, this is the challenge with the concept of authority: we look at it through the lens of fallen man and sanction it as ok because scripture says to submit to it, regardless of

outcome. I know there is scripture on submission to authority, but the reason for it being there is precisely due to the point I am making. Submission keeps the fallen nature in check. Consider this: If the human race was no longer fallen, meaning all were conformed to the image of God's Son, would there be authority as we have known it (i.e., power and control over one another)? Well, I suggest "no". Consider these loosely connected eight points.

First, we need to consider the world's definition of authority. Here's a compilation:

*power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior; the president's authority; freedom granted by one in authority; persons in command, specifically, government; a governmental agency or corporation to administer a revenue-producing public enterprise; **power to enforce laws, exact obedience, command, determine, or judge**; one that is invested with this power, especially a government or body of government officials; power assigned to another; authorization.*

The bold portion of the definition is the most succinct and, probably, most accepted view of authority. The words *power* and *exact* convey the idea of exerting force over the will of people, which is truly the primary mechanism of authority in our day that is manifesting in what many call *authoritarianism*. Also, we need to note the emphasis on government as a source of authority. Around the globe today, governments are exacting obedience from their citizens that are now beginning to wake up and revolt against this exacting. This is a prime example of the fallen nature of man commanding the fallen nature of man.

Second, let us consider government. Obviously, government and authority go hand-in-hand. So, what is government? In the general sense, it is the exercise of authority within and over any organization from small to large—from a club to a business to an institution to a nation to the entire world. Anything that is organized to perform a certain purpose has some form of government to ensure it reaches its intended potential. In a sense, this definition is rather benign. After all, the world, from the local level to the entire globe, needs some level of organization in order for life to go on; otherwise, chaos will ensue.

However, as benign as this definition is, the same point about authority applies to governments, especially the higher orders of government—namely, it is about fallen man organizing fallen man, forming what could be called *man's order* (as opposed to God's divine order). As I've pointed out many times, we live in what could be called *man's day*, where fallen man judges. As Paul wrote: *To me it is for a very little thing that by you I may be judged, or by **man's day**, but not even myself do I judge* (1 Corinthians 4:3 YLT). For those with doubts about this, consider the kingdom declaration that has gone forth by the great voices sounding forth from God's realm.

And the seventh messenger did sound, and there came great voices in the heaven,

saying, '**The kingdoms of the world** did become those of our Lord and of His Christ, and he shall reign to the ages of the ages!' (Revelation 11:15 YLT)

The expression *kingdoms of the world* is the same as the expression *man's order* or *man's day*. Consider man's order today. Many governments have overstepped their bounds in such a way that unrest among the people is on the rise where the judges (rulers) of the people have become tyrants. More could be written about the present state of affairs of authority and governments around the world, but those who are paying attention don't need much explanation, for it is as plain as day, as they say.

A counter argument to what is being proposed is that without government and authority in a fallen world, there would be total anarchy and chaos. No argument there! Actually, this validates my point that authority is a needed tool to keep the fallen nature of man in line, even if authority comes through like-natured people. And, God knows it.

Third, the history of the human race makes it clear that all governments and authorities eventually fail. Barring external factors beyond man's control, history proves that what is built by fallen man eventually rots from within and crumbles when shaking comes, such as we are witnessing two decades into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is said especially for those in the US who think all they need to do is elect into government good leaders (as they judge them to be) or one party over another and all will be well. It's like chasing after fool's gold!

All need to be reminded of a word from Jesus that, contextually, referred to the nation of Israel as He walked amongst those that had repeatedly broken the old covenant (especially the religious leaders) and were about to demand His crucifixion. Surely, if Jesus walked amongst the nations today, He would make the same judgment.

Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. (Matthew 12:33 NASB)

Jesus walked amongst those of the bad tree that produced bad fruit. We know this is true, for He later declared that the Kingdom of God would be taken away from them and given to a people, *producing the fruit of it* (Matthew 21:43)—that is, given to the new-covenant Israel. In this case, the "them" were the unrighteous scribes and Pharisees that He later heaped woes upon. By the way; Jeremiah prophesied of this very condition, expressing it as *very bad figs which could not be eaten due to rottenness* (Jeremiah 24).

Brethren, especially in the US, it's time to wake up. The trees, representing nations, have become bad and their fruit has become rotten. As John the baptizer prophesied, the axe of God was about to be brought to bear against the bad tree of his day, and so is God's axe going to be brought to bear on the bad trees of the world; the US being no exception, as

He has lifted [lifted up His hammer](#) over our nation. Our two-party, lobby-driven, influence-buying governmental system has become rotten and all that enter into it run the risk of becoming rotten, as well. It takes an extremely strong, righteous, and courageous person to swim against the stream of rot. None have risen to the surface as of yet. Well, I could go on about how dire, from man's perspective, things look at the moment; however, I must move on to what I believe best explains authority from God's perspective.

Fourth, some might see King Jesus ruling with a rod of iron as a form of man's power and control. I don't believe this is true. Please see: [Rod of Iron: Scepter of Truth](#). Bottom line is that the rod of iron is the scepter of truth. *I AM the Truth!* As noted in the [first link](#), authority is life and truth, and Jesus is both!

Fifth, what about Isaiah 9:6-7 that says *the government rests on His shoulders and there will be no end to the increase of government*, or Luke 1:33 that says *His kingdom shall have no frontier*? For an explanation of "frontier", see page 16 of [Kingdom of God: Pioneers](#).

The Hebrew word translated *government* is *misraw* [Strong H4951] and only appears in these two verses. Some translations use the words *dominion* and *kingdom* in place of *government*. Regardless of which word is used, what is of more importance is the nature of His rule, which Isaiah says will be of **peace, justice, and righteousness**. Surely, this doesn't describe any government on earth today, meaning that what King Jesus offers is not of this realm. (Solomon's kingdom came the closest to this, but it too failed.) We must not make the same mistake the Jews made when the Messiah of Israel walked amongst them. They expected a potentate that would fight off Roman rule. They were looking for a king that would lead them into a battle of the flesh, not one that would give them peace and rest by dying on a cross—a battle won in spirit. We must not look at the governments of the nations as if modeled after His government; they are realms apart.

Sixth, Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and on earth for a very specific purpose: to subject all things unto Himself, dissolving all government and authority.

After that comes the end, when **He will turn the kingdom over to God His Father, when He will put an end to all other government, authority, and power**; for He must continue to be king until He puts all His enemies under His feet. Death is the last enemy to be stopped [abolished], for He has put everything in subjection under His feet. But when He says that everything has been put in subjection to Him, He Himself is evidently excepted who put it all in subjection to Him. And when everything has been put in subjection to Him, then the Son Himself will also become subject to Him who has put everything in subjection to Him, so that God may be everything to everybody [all in all]. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28 Williams [added, along with bold])

Some teach that this has already taken place, but this ignores the reality on the ground. The big question is this: Why would God want all authority abolished if it were good for the human race? Well, it was never God's best for the human race; only a temporary necessity to keep fallen man in line. Psalm 110:2 says of God's king: ***Yahweh sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter (rod of strength). Rule in the midst of your enemies!*** Man's authority and power are enemies of God and a hindrance to achieving His ultimate purpose. This leads to the two final points and the message of this insight.

Seventh, as king, Jesus' mission is to deliver up His kingdom to His father, and this requires absolute subjection of all things to Himself, including the abolishment of all that is not of His nature or the nature of His realm. In other words, He reigns until this is all accomplished. Scripture gives us an interesting progression.

**In Him were all things created** (Colossians 1:23)

Then when the time is right, God will do all that he has planned, and **Christ will bring together everything in heaven and on earth, or head up all in the Christ**—both that in the heavens and that on the earth (Ephesians 1:10)

Then after Christ has destroyed all powers and forces, the end (consummation) will come, and **He will give the kingdom to God the Father**. (1 Corinthians 15:24)

All things were created in God's Son, giving Him the right of ownership of all things. He went to the cross to deliver His creation from its fallen nature so that He could (and ultimately will) head up or sum up all things in Himself. It's His right, and all that is summed up enters His kingdom as subjects of His realm. In the process, He destroys all the enemies of God, that is, enemies of the cross. Then, finally, He willingly hands over the kingdom to His Father so that God may be all in all (all new and all in love)—the ultimate purpose of God. We could say that the Son created all things and then rescues all things—all in accord with the purpose set forth by His Father. This leads to a question and the eighth and last point.

Eighth, if there is to be no more authority or government, what is God up to?

God saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to His own purpose and the grace. He gave us this grace in King Jesus before all time and ages, but has now made it visible through the appearing of our Savior, King Jesus, who abolished [abolishes] death and, through the gospel, **shone [illuminates] a light on life and immortality [incorruption]**. (2 Timothy 1:9-10 Kingdom-NT [CLV] bold added)

Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, **to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren** [or: **firstborn of a large family**]. (Romans 8:28-29 CLV [Kingdom-NT] bold added)

Apart from death being abolished, four things stand out in these verses: **life, immortality, conformed to the image of His Son, and firstborn of a large family.**

These four things sum up God becoming all in all. His *all* is about life—His Son, the one who is the Life, life beyond death, that is, immortal life—and having a large family conformed to the image of His Son.

In his kingdom translation, I believe N.T. Wright best captures the heart of God by taking *firstborn among many brethren* (some translations state *many brothers and sisters*) and translating it as ***firstborn of a large family***. This is the Father's heart and the reason ***God is love*** is called ***Father***.

This is all possible because the Son is ***the firstborn of creation, the firstborn from among the dead, and the firstborn of a large family***. How marvelously great is the good news!!

A point made in [Kingdom of God: God's Family](#) is that when the kingdom is handed up to the Father, it won't be like any kingdom we have ever known, if it is even called a *kingdom*. The Father is driving toward a large family, which means this is the principle upon which God's *all in all* will operate. Authority and government, as we have known it, must be abolished in order to establish family—a family of spirit-animated people in the image of their big brother, Jesus, in union with their creator.

Well, I'll leave it here with this one final point about authority and government. These are nothing more than transitory, imperfect concepts that were put in place to offer some level of control of unredeemed flesh, that is, of carnal, fallen man. Just like death, they must be abolished—that is, go into death. They are not part of God's realm when He is all in all—all new and all in love.

**God the Father will have a large family, all to His glory, as authority is swallowed up in Love and Life. This is the Truth!**

Our safeguard today is the mind of Christ. We need our Lord's mind to guide us how and when we are to submit to man's imperfect authority; never losing sight that we must fully submit without reservation to God's absolute authority.