



III. GOVERNMENT

A. Two Types of Biblical Government

1. United church and state
 - a. Scriptural in the Old Testament—One centralized source set the standard for righteousness (Exodus 20:8-10; Exodus 35:2-3) and implemented correction to transgressors (Numbers 15:32-36). It was only when kings were rebellious to the word of God that the government appear to be more of a separation of church and state.
 - b. Scriptural in the Kingdom Age—One centralized source will set the standard of righteousness (Zechariah 14:16) and implement correction to those who transgress (Zechariah 14:17-21).
2. Separation of church and state—Government does not enforce or restrict the free exercise of religion. The standard of righteousness is set by God Himself (Romans 13:8-10), but the implementation of correction is the responsibility of government (Romans 13:1-7). Only when governments and religion are rebellious against the word of God does a nation appear more to be a united church and state.
 - a. The stated problem for lack of separation (Matthew 20:25)
 - (1) The nature of Gentiles (Matthew 20:25)
 - (2) The unscriptural union (Revelation 17:1-6)
 - (3) The practical concerns
 - a) The ruler's conscience could be violated by false religion.
 - b) The church's conscience is violated by corrupt government and persecution and coercion prevail.
3. The scriptural response to rebellion
 - a. When government rebels
 - (1) The church prays (1 Timothy 2:1-8).
 - (2) The church suffers (1 Peter 4:12-19).
 - (3) The church preaches (Acts 5:26-32).
 - b. When religion rebels—The church handles its doctrinal or moral problems within until it involves harming others (Romans 13:8-10).
4. The formula for godly government
 - a. Biblical checks and balances (Isaiah 33:22)
 - (1) Introductory thoughts—Our government was established with three branches in an effort to keep any one individual or group from gaining an unreasonable amount of power.
 - (2) The plan—Man is sinful and when in authority, it is dangerous for one man or one group of people to be (Isaiah 33:22):
 - a) Lawgiver—make the laws (Legislative)
 - b) King—carry out the laws (Executive)
 - c) Judge—evaluate the laws (Judicial)



- b. Biblical participants
 - (1) Biblical citizens
 - (2) Biblical rulers (Deuteronomy 17:14-20)
- c. Biblical reach
 - (1) God's authority (Romans 13:1-2, 4, 6)
 - a) Powers that be are ordained of God (Romans 13:1).
 - b) Resistance of the God-ordained power is resistance against the ordinance of God (Romans 13:2).
 - c) The ruler is God's minister (Romans 13:4, 6).
 - (2) Man's responsibility
 - a) When a person does what is right, the country's governing bodies should "praise" him, but he should "be afraid" when choosing to do evil (Romans 13:3-4).
 - b) Leaders are to be a terror to evil, bearing the sword of judgment and executing "wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Romans 13:4).
- 5. The tendency to overreach
 - a. Employer and employee agreements (see also Matthew 25:14-30)
 - (1) The right to hire and belongs to employers (Matthew 20:1).
 - (2) The wages are to be determined solely based upon an agreement between employer and employee (Matthew 20:2).
 - (3) So long as an agreement is made between employee and employer, the employees have no fair gripe regarding the labour and wages given to others (Matthew 20:3-16).
 - b. Provisions for the poor
 - (1) There are misconceptions regarding socialism and the early church (Acts 4:32-37; Acts 5:1-11).
 - a) The decision to have all things common was the decision of believers (Acts 4:32).
 - b) The believers asked the apostles to manage the distributions according to need (Acts 4:34-37).
 - c) Ananias and Sapphira were not killed for holding back, but for lying to the Holy Ghost (Acts 5:1-11).
 - (2) The assistance of those in need is first the responsibility of the family of the one in need (1 Timothy 5:3-16). Afterwards, believers can choose whether or not to offer assistance in special times of need (Romans 15:26).
 - (3) Consistently, the scripture identified food and raiment as the only necessities of life (Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 6:8; James 2:15-16). However, it was expected that assistance, even of the necessities, would be withheld from those who were unwilling to work (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12).
 - c. Etc. (Marriage, home, medical, education)



B. The Role of Citizens

1. The call to obedience
 - a. The plea for obedience
 - (1) We are to be subject unto the higher powers (Romans 13:1).
 - (2) We are to be subject to principalities and powers, obey magistrates, and be ready to every good work (Titus 3:1).
 - (3) We are to submit to every ordinance of man (1 Peter 2:13, 16).
 - b. The purpose for obedience
 - (1) We obey in hopes of avoiding wrath (Romans 13:5).
 - (2) We obey for conscience sake (Romans 13:5).
 - (3) We obey for the Lord's sake (1 Peter 2:13, 15-16).
2. The call to respect
 - a. The reason for respect (Romans 13:1-2, 4, 7)
 - b. The means of respect
 - (1) We respond properly in the face of foolish behaviour (Titus 3:2-3; 2 Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10).
 - (2) We do not use our liberty in unscrupulous ways (1 Peter 2:16).
 - (3) We honour the rulers (Romans 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17).
3. The call to support
 - a. Financially (Romans 13:6-7; see Matthew 9:9; Matthew 17:24-27)
 - b. Prayerfully (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

C. Understanding Hierarchy or Authority

1. Respect for authority
 - a. Those who know God should be the first to obey, submit to (Romans 13:2), and pray for (1 Timothy 2:1-2) those in authority.
 - b. Those who walk in the flesh “despise government” and “are not afraid to speak evil of dignities” (2 Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8).
2. When authorities conflict
 - a. It should never be our desire to stand against government; yet, we will, at some point, be confronted with the conflicting choice to obey God rather than to obey men's anti-scriptural precepts.
 - b. When confronted with this very issue (Acts 4:15-20), Simon Peter gave believers a simple principle by which to live, “We ought to obey God rather than man” (Acts 5:29).
 - c. The answer found here also applied in the book of Daniel (Daniel 3:15-18; Daniel 6:6-10).
 - d. So long as government does not overstep its God-given bounds, the believer should joyfully submit.
 - e. Yet, when the government opposes the clear teachings of scripture, the believer should choose to obey God.



IV. HISTORY

A. The Importance of History

1. Israel was told to “remember the days of old” and “consider the years of many generations” (Deuteronomy 32:7). This was to be accomplished by asking parental and societal authority figures (Deuteronomy 32:7).
2. Bildad admonished Job to “inquire...of the former age” and “to the search of their fathers” (Job 8:8) and expect that “they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart” (Job 8:10).
3. Asaph promised to “utter dark sayings of old” (Psalm 78:2) which he had “heard and known” and which the fathers had told them (Psalm 78:3).

B. The Revelation of History

1. History reveals the hand of God in putting down and setting up rulers (Psalm 75:6-7; Daniel 2:21).
2. History reveals the purpose, knowledge, and wisdom of God in “declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done” (Isaiah 46:9-11).
3. History unveils God’s providence in the lives of believers and nations (Romans 8:28).

C. The Repetition of History (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

1. The circumstances
 - a. The past—“The thing that hath been”
 - b. The present and future—“it is that which shall be”
2. The actions
 - a. The past—“that which is done”
 - b. The present and future—“is that which shall be done”

D. The Lessons of History (1 Corinthians 10:11)

1. History helps us understand God’s plan for the ages (Ephesians 1:9-10).
2. History helps us understand people (James 5:11, 17).
3. History helps us understand Christian experience (Hebrews 11:33, 38).
4. History provides illustrations and exemplifies Bible principles (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:6-11).
5. History shows error and how it develops (Galatians 5:9).
6. History explains the present (Deuteronomy 8:11-18; Isaiah 51:1).
7. History enables one to follow the example of Christ and the apostles (Matthew 23:35; Luke 13:1-4; see Acts chapter 7).