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ABOUT

Capitol Ministries® 12



 GOVERNMENT & ECONOMICS SERIES | PART 2

God's Institutions and Their Roles on Earth



DEFICIT SPENDING HAS CAUSED THE United States national budget to explode as a well-meaning but ill-informed Congress attempts to meet every constituent's need through the public purse. But much more than that, the social programs the government pays to its citizens account for well over half of the budget deficit. While such governing has become commonplace, even applauded in many circles, both are unsound fiscal practice. God never intended for government to meet all citizens' needs.

One of the huge problems of an increasingly secularized American government is the belief that civil government is the trunk of the tree in society and culture versus what we say we believe: "In God We Trust." Scripture declares God as being the trunk of the tree, not government. In fact, government is but one of the tree's five branches.

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- CABINET: 7:00 AM Wednesdays, location undisclosed, refreshments served.
- SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, rotating offices, hot breakfast served.
- HOUSE: 7:45 AM Thursdays, The Capitol Hill Club, hot breakfast served.

The views expressed in each Bible study are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study Sponsor.



Representative Paul Tittl



Paul Tittl is the Wisconsin state representative from District 25 and is the sponsor of the Capitol Ministries Wisconsin Bible Study led by Mike Beresford since 2016. This is his Christian testimony.

“A few years ago, I shared with about 300 people at the Wisconsin Republican Convention Prayer Breakfast about different addiction courts in the state of Wisconsin and I said, ‘There but for the grace of God, go I.’

“I told them: ‘I am thoroughly convinced that had I continued down my road of self-destruction, I would not be talking to you because I would be dead.’ But God can even use a guy who drank way too much and did a lot of bad stuff in his youth to serve Him in the Capitol.

“I was raised in a very religious home in a mainline denomination. We went to church every Sunday. I was forced to. When I was 18, I stopped going because it didn’t have meaning to me.

“In 1986 I was destroying my life through a variety of abuses and spiraling out of control.

“Several friends shared what Christ had done in their lives and one day I decided to watch the 700 Club at my parent’s house while they were at work. At their kitchen table, I heard that God wants to do something with my life. I said, ‘Okay Lord. If you want to do

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Most believers today think God manifests His reign in a fallen world between His first and second coming via three institutions: church, family, and state. I believe there are two additional institutions: marriage and commerce.

I think the proper biblical teaching and Christian worldview is that God has ordained five institutions in contrast to secularists who have come to accept the government as the one final provider and authority, believing it is the end-all for everything. How wrong they are! In theology circles, what we are discussing is referred to as “the mediated reign of Christ.”

This week we look at the five institutions that were created by God and revealed in the Bible, and especially the role that God meant for government.

This study will prove insight. It will provide you with great and immediate discernment and a keen perspective that will inform your judgment on most policy issues.

Read on, my friend!

Ralph Drollinger

I. INTRODUCTION

This is a basic and necessary Bible study for every officeholder. As a matter of fact, it is such an important Bible study that my objective is to teach you how to teach this to others. You should be able to preach this in a church or teach what follows in a small group. My prayer is that God will use this not only to equip you, but to serve others with great wisdom.

Since God is sovereign and omnipotent, how does He reign in the world today between the first and second advents of His Son, Jesus Christ? The Scriptures provide the answer; He mediates His reign through His ordination of five institutions during this present period of biblical history, the church age. Another way of stating this concept is to refer to it as the administration of God as referred to in 1 Timothy 1:4:

“Nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.”

In a personal illustration of this concept, the apostle Paul informs his understudy Timothy not to be diverted from furthering the administration of God (in this case via the particular institution of the church). In Luke 16:2, this same English word *administration* (which is the underlying Greek root *oikonomia* as used in the above passage) is translated as “management” and “manager” respectively:

“And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’”

Further, in 1 Corinthians 4:1, this same root word is translated as “stewards:”



“Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

Oikos is the Greek word for “house,” and *nomos* the word for “manager.” “Economist” is the closest English derivative—notice that phonetically it is nearly a transliteration. This word is a historic reference to one who manages the affairs of a household. As we will see, this word is used in other biblical passages to indicate how God manages His relationship to the world at a given time. In Ephesians 3:2 (here in the context of the institution of the church), notice what the apostle Paul says about himself:

“If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you.”

Paul viewed himself as a *steward* (*oikonomia*) of God’s grace which was given to him by God for us. As a public servant, albeit you are assigned to a different God-ordained institution, His institution of the state:

You must view yourself in the same light. As a good administrator of government, you must be a good manager, a good steward of this particular institution.

Still, another English equivalent (as used in the New American Standard Bible translation) is the noun *dispensation*, best understood through its English verbal equivalent as “to dispense.” How then does the sovereign, omnipotent God of the universe—as declared in and by Scripture—administrate, manage, steward, or dispense His reign in a fallen world today, one fractured by sin, in His physical absence? The answer is via His ordained institutions, the church and state being just two of five.

Now, and very importantly, let’s go a step further in unfolding this big concept. The apostle Peter is instructing early Christians regarding the institution of the state in 1 Peter 2:13–15. The context of the passage that follows pertains to believers having a good witness with the leaders of the state. He says, therefore, that the following must be present:

“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him.... For such is the will of God.”

The main verb or action of this God-given command is to *submit*, or subjugate (in Greek, *hupotasso*), meaning “to place oneself under” the institution of the state in this case. But more broadly, notice Peter includes the word *every*, meaning every other [God-ordained] institution. It follows then, that whenever and wherever the Greek word *hupotasso* exists in the New Testament, that it might be in reference to identifying the existence of a God-ordained institution. But what exactly is an institution in terms of the underlying Greek words translated into English here as “institution”? Could it be that the underlying Greek words have a more exacting meaning than the broad English term *institution*? Indeed, that is the case.

The Greek words behind the English word *institution* are *anthropine ktisei*, meaning in a literal sense (of the adjective-noun word combination) “for mankind what is created.” *Ktisei* is the Greek noun for “create.” It literally means “what has been created by God for mankind.” (the root word *Anthropos* means “man.”) This is a classic example of the Greek language having a more exact meaning than the English derivative. The broad-meaning English word *institution* fails to con-

VERSE OF THE WEEK

1 Corinthians 4:1

“Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”



We must be good stewards of government—good managers of His institutions.

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something with this life, you have to take away this alcohol problem.”

“Then I opened my Bible at random and my eyes fell on Proverbs 20:1 ‘Wine is a mocker strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.’ The Lord was answering my prayer even though I had not yet given my life to Him.

“I had been trying to sell something to a pastor at a little Baptist church and he had invited me to service. I had agreed just to make a sale, but that Wednesday I really wanted to go. When I got there the parking lot was empty and the sign said the service was Thursday night. I had three appointments Thursday night, but by

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noon all had called to reschedule. So, I went to church and I loved it. I went again Sunday morning and on Sunday night I gave my life to Christ. I was 24 and my life radically changed. God removed the alcohol addiction, it was miraculous. That was Feb. 9, 1986 and I reached my 33rd anniversary as a Christian. I have more years with Christ than I do without Him.

“At a Promise Keepers event in Colorado, I heard a speaker say more Christians were needed in public office, and I thought, I can do that. I ran and won seats on the Manitowoc City, and then, County Boards before running for the Wisconsin State Assembly in 2006. I lost but ran again in 2012 and won. Immediately I searched for a Bible study at the Capitol. Finding none, I decided to start one. The day before I was sworn in, the pastors, deacons, and elders of Faith Church prayed over me at all three services as if they were sending forth a missionary to Madison.

“The next morning the first official email I sent said I was starting a Bible study in my office at the Capitol on Wednesday mornings and that all were welcome. Since that first Wednesday, I have never been alone. God has raised up an amazing group of Christian men who are serving along side of me. We encourage and pray for each other, and we share each other’s burdens. That first study counted 12 Representatives and two Senators. Two were Democrats and one of them was Jewish.

“It’s important to remember that we will answer to God for our decisions, including the ones we make in our political life. Abraham Lincoln said, ‘...my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God’s side, for God is always right.’ And he is. We serve an awesome God who is alive today and is willing to use people like me. I am still in awe. Sometimes when I’m worshiping on a Sunday morning, my mind drifts back to the past, and I can’t begin to understand what God saw in me. I am humbled and so thankful. One of my favorite Paul Titl quotes is, ‘Because HE lives, I Live!’”

vey all that the Greek word combination carries with it.

However, when you consider the English verb equivalent of the noun, *to institute* means “to establish in a particular position” (*Merriam-Webster*). Therein lies a better hint of the substantive meaning of *anthropine ktisei*. **Submitting** to every God-ordained particular authority, as this passage indicates, is in keeping with the will of God.¹

The implication and larger context of Peter’s inspired instruction, believers **submitting to every “for man created by God” institution**, per the whole of this passage, is equated with **submission** to God Himself.² While that may be hard to understand here, it is borne out by the many passages depicting these authority-submission relationships inherent in each of the following ordained institutions.³ What might be difficult to extrapolate from this aforementioned passage of Scripture alone will be simple to realize and grasp in and from the following passages.

Again, if the identifier of the existence of a God-ordained institution is the command to submit, then there are five—not three—institutions evidenced in Scripture. What follows are explanations of those five explicit authority-submission relationships with supporting scriptural passages.

After presenting each of the five institutions with at least three different identifying passages that depict the existence of an authority-submission relationship, I will then provide passages for each that relate to the institution’s God-ordained purpose. Rather than comment on each (in a study that is already lengthy), I will leave it up to you to ascertain the related point being made from each passage.

Finally, I will conclude by illustrating the corruptions that follow the commingling of institutions, i.e., when the secularists promote the institution of government as preeminent versus all five being equal in God’s mind. Note the five institutions that follow are in no particular order of importance.

II. THE STATE: AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION PASSAGES

A. ROMANS 13:1–3

“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. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For 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.”

B. 1 PETER 2:13–14

“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him.”

C. TITUS 3:1–2

“Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.”

The state: its purpose is to moralize.

D. ROMANS 13:4–7

“For 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. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

E. 1 PETER 2:14–17

"For the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."

Probably the most important aspect of these passages (in terms of present applicability) relates to God's explicit intentions for the state: *"the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right."* To say it with gentleness, it is therefore wise for governing officials to avoid over-involvement with other institutions—public servants should allow latitude versus interfering with the other institutions that God has ordained and allow them to do what they are designed by God to achieve. Each institution is more efficient than any other institution in achieving what God designed it to do.

It is biblically fallacious to think government is God's only vehicle to achieve His will in the world.

God explicitly limits the state's purposes in the passages just cited. The state's

purpose is not expanded anywhere else in Scripture. Again, government will not accomplish as effectively or as efficiently what God has ordained as the responsibility and purposes of other institutions. In summary, the God-ordained purpose of the state is to quell evil in a fallen world through corporeal punishment. The outward force of exacting retribution for sin can be deemed "to moralize society."

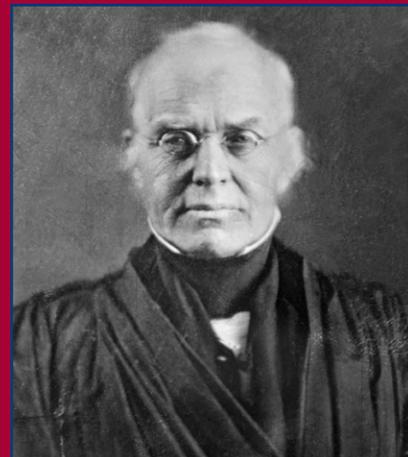
III. COMMERCE: AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION PASSAGES

The commercial economy of the Roman Empire, at the time of the writing of the New Testament (NT), was that of a master-slave compensation relationship. Without delving into it, although the names in the relationship are similar to American slavery, it is believed by most commentators that the manifestation of employment was quite different. (This is not to suggest it was less than evil in and of itself.) Notwithstanding, the NT writers concentrate on what is preeminent to the many social ills of the Roman Empire: inward change through the gospel versus any emphasis on changing this particular cultural evil (cf. the NT book of Philemon). The point related to this study is to utilize these passages to illustrate the authority-submission relationship that exists in the institution of commerce both then and now (not to debate the issue of slavery and the Bible).

A. 1 PETER 2:18–21

"Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harsh-

Joseph Story



"I verily believe that Christianity is necessary to support a civil society and shall ever attend to its institutions and acknowledge its precepts as the pure and natural sources of private and social happiness.

— Joseph Story, U.S. congressman; "Father of American Jurisprudence" U.S. Supreme Court justice appointed by President James Madison.

Joseph Story, *Life and Letters of Joseph Story*, William W. Story, editor (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1851), Vol. I, p. 92, March 24, 1801.





George Washington



ly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps."

B. EPHESIANS 6:5

"Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ."

C. COLOSSIANS 3:22

"Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord."

Commerce: its purpose is to economize.

A part of the curse on mankind as a result of the fall in Genesis 3 is man's toil in labor. Genesis 3:17–19 states:

"In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.... By the sweat of your face you will eat bread."

Labor in and of itself is part of the creation and is not to be thought of as a curse. God intends for man to achieve dignity through work. But labor, after the fall, will now always be difficult in some way.

Nevertheless, the institution of commerce serves to create sustenance and temporal provisions, if not prosperity, for man's needs. This is the purpose of this institution as bestowed by the Creator. The state, in contrast, was not and is not intended or designed by the Creator to efficiently economize a culture (as previ-

ously seen, it is to moralize a culture).

In addition to these first described two institutions' roles, properly understood, they aid the public servant to reason through otherwise difficult and complex policy issues. (For instance, this construct can be applied to the present healthcare debate.) But in addition to these two institutions, a legislator or cabinet member must be knowledgeable concerning the three remaining institutions that God has *created for mankind* as revealed in the Bible. They follow.

IV. MARRIAGE: AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION PASSAGES

A. 1 PETER 3:1–5

"In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands."

B. EPHESIANS 5:22–23, 28–33

"Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body."

"So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no

"The propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained."

— George Washington, first president of the United States; commander-in-chief of the Continental Army; member of the Continental Congress; president of the Constitutional Convention; 'Father of His Country;' judge.

George Washington, *First Inaugural Address*, April 30, 1798.



one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”

C. 1 CORINTHIANS 11:3

“But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.”

Marriage: its purpose is to materialize (among others).

D. PROVIDE PROCREATION: GENESIS 1:27–28

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

Procreation, materializing the next generation, is one of the primary purposes God created the institution of marriage. Further purposes for the institution (in addition to materializing the next generation) follow:

E. TO PROVIDE PERSONIFICATION OF CHRIST’S LOVE FOR THE CHURCH: EPHESIANS 5:24–27

“But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.”

F. TO PROVIDE PARTNERSHIP: GENESIS 2:18

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”

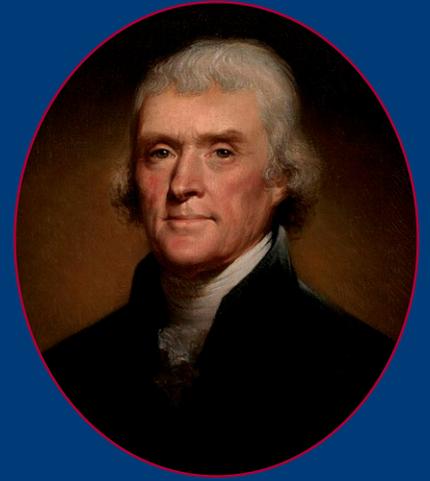
G. TO PROVIDE PLEASURE: PROVERBS 5:18–19

“Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love.”

Notice these four manifold purposes for God’s construct of marriage. They are all wonderful! God intends for marriage to be fulfilling as long as it is conducted in His ways (between one man and one woman). Make sure you prioritize your marriage and continue to build equity into your relationship, especially given the difficult lifestyle you lead as a public servant, which often causes you to be separated from your spouse. Safeguard and protect your sacred marriage.

It is God who defines marriage. For the state to redefine marriage is hubristic and serves to illustrate an overreach in institutional purpose.

Thomas Jefferson



“A wise and frugal government... shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government.”

— Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States; signer of the Declaration of Independence; diplomat; governor of Virginia; secretary of state.

Thomas Jefferson, *First Inaugural Address*, March 4, 1801.





James Monroe



“How prone all human institutions have been to decay; how subject the best-formed and most wisely organized governments have been to lose their check and totally dissolve; how difficult it has been for mankind, in all ages and countries, to preserve their dearest rights and best privileges, impelled as it were by an irresistible fate of despotism.”

— James Monroe, lawyer; governor of Virginia; U.S. senator; the U.S. ambassador to France and Britain; seventh secretary of state, eighth secretary of war; fifth president of the United States.

James Monroe, speech in the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 10, 1788.

V. THE FAMILY: AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION PASSAGES

A. EPHESIANS 6:1–4

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

B. COLOSSIANS 3:20

“Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.”

C. HEBREWS 12:5–11

“And you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, ‘MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.’ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it,

afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

The family: its purpose is to catechize.

D. TO RAISE A GODLY HERITAGE: EPHESIANS 6:4; PROVERBS 22:6; DEUTERONOMY 4:9

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

“Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.”

E. TO BE A BLESSING: PROVERBS 17:6; PROVERBS 31:28

“Grandchildren are the crown of old men, and the glory of sons is their fathers.”

“Her children rise up and bless her.”

The primary purpose of the institution of family is to raise godly children for the growth of the church and Christ's kingdom and its ensuing, resulting positive impact on culture. The fruit of strong families—the first line in disciple-making—inures to the overall benefit of every other institution.

It is a serious error when the state interferes with parents' raising their children



in a biblical manner. For example, Scripture teaches that parents are to discipline their children at a young age in order to curb their sin nature. If government curtails that institutional responsibility and inalienable right, then government and society will inherit citizens who lack discipline, most likely necessitating a police state in the next generation.

Again, it is hubristic for government to think it knows best how parents should raise their kids! Scripture is God's intended informant for child-rearing, not government.

VI. THE CHURCH: AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION PASSAGES

A. HEBREWS 13:17

“Obey your [church] leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”

B. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12–13

“But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.”

C. ACTS 20:28

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

D. 1 PETER 5:1–5

“Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another.”

The church: its purpose is to evangelize.

God's primary purpose for His Church is to make disciples (Matthew 28:18–20). He achieves this by giving evangelists and pastor-teachers to this institution (Ephesians 4:11–12; Romans 10:15). In 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul states a unique characteristic of the church, which in one sense separates it from every other God-ordained institution. Notice this when the apostle Paul describes the institution of the church in the following way:

“But in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.”

The church, or the “household of God” as referred to here, is the *support* (*hedraion*) of the truth. The word means “under girder,” “foundation,” or “bulwark.” No other God-ordained institution previously examined possesses such a moniker of distinction! The implications are huge. In essence, this means

James McHenry



“[P]ublic utility pleads most forcibly for the general distribution of the Holy Scriptures. Without the Bible, in vain do we increase penal laws and draw entrenchments around our institutions.”

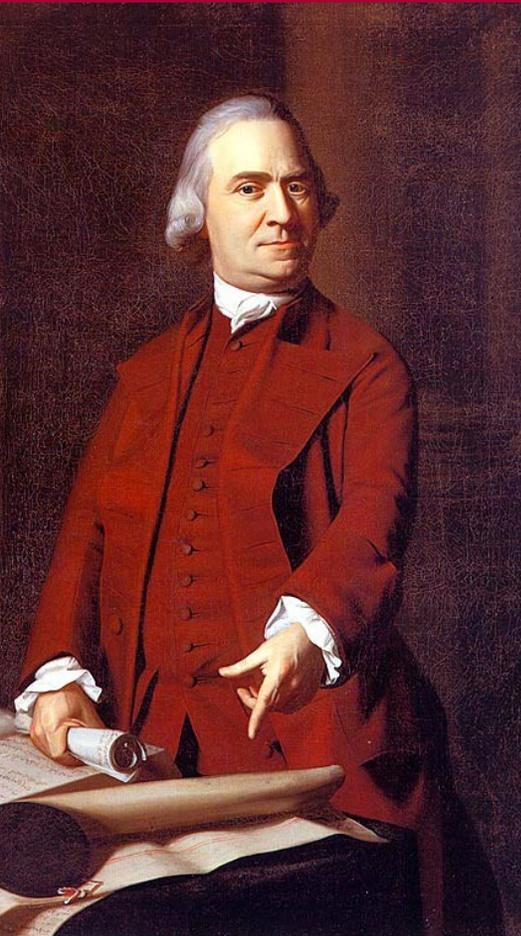
— James McHenry, Revolutionary War officer; signer of the Constitution; ratifier of the U.S. Constitution; secretary of war under presidents George Washington and John Adams.

Bernard C. Steiner, *One Hundred and Ten Years of Bible Society Work in Maryland, 1810–1920* (Maryland Bible Society, 1921), p. 14.





Samuel Adams



“In the supposed state of nature, all men are equally bound by the laws of nature, or to speak more properly, the laws of the Creator.”

— Samuel Adams, signer of the Declaration of Independence; father of the American Revolution; ratifier of the U.S. Constitution; governor of Massachusetts.

Samuel Adams, *letter to the Legislature of Massachusetts*, January 17, 1794.

that all other institutions ordained by God in the church age are dependent on the health of the church, which is synonymous with its effectiveness to make disciples who become the preservers and illuminators (cf. Matthew 5:13–14) *of the truth* in and for all the others. Granted, the church’s primary focus is on building another kingdom, Christ’s kingdom that is “*not of this world*” (John 18:36), but tangentially, it produces (at least should produce) men and women of Christian character who are model, mature-in-Christ’s-character individuals for the other God-ordained establishments. Disciple-making has an effect on the here and now, not just God’s spiritual, eternal kingdom. No other institution can accomplish this task. The church has unique value, and whether they realize it or not, all the other institutions are dependent on the health of the church and its disciple making abilities!⁴

VII. THE FOCUS OF INSTITUTIONS

As indicated, each of the five institutions has uniquely ordained purposes from on high. Each need be allowed to do what it does best.

One cannot expect the church to arrest thieves on the street anymore than one can expect the state to make disciples in the church.

One cannot expect commerce to produce good children any more than one can expect families to produce automobiles.

Each institution is uniquely gifted and endowed by God. The wise legislator and cabinet member will heed God’s way of

mediating His reign between His first and second Coming and His means to presently manifest His will in a fallen world by respecting His design and purpose for each institution.

VIII. THE FAULT OF INSTITUTIONS

Here are some of the problems that occur when the state (to choose one institution) confuses its role with others or begins acting beyond its purposes (of “rewarding those who do good and punishing those who do evil”). When government plays in the sand box (so to speak) of another God-ordained establishment, notice some possible outcomes:

Confusing the state with other institutions

State eclipsing marriage: redefinition

State eclipsing family: nanny state

State eclipsing commerce: socialism

State eclipsing church: theocracy

All of the above represent aberrations from God’s revealed will. They lead to inefficient, sometimes disastrous consequences. We have the owner’s manual; we should not deviate from its directions. To do so is to in part introduce a theological-ly incorrect government-and-economics outcome in a given country.



IX. CONCLUSION

This study, which is in essence a study in Christian worldview, serves to provide the Christian officeholder with a biblically based perspective for governing. If one does not know what he believes, or why he believes what he believes, then this study is especially pertinent. Here is a construct, taken from Holy Writ, that is attuned with the Creator's blueprint. Remember the purposes of each institution. Here is a two-word takeaway summary:

STATE: to moralize

COMMERCE: to economize

MARRIAGE: to materialize

FAMILY: to catechize

CHURCH: to evangelize

Furthermore, from a theological perspective:

State exists to manifest God's restraining grace. God didn't have to restrain sin after the fall.

Commerce exists to manifest common grace. God didn't have to provide a means of and for producing value-added products and services after the fall.

Marriage exists to manifest creational grace. God didn't have to prolong putting up with the agony of dealing with wretched individuals after the fall.

Family exists to manifest formation-al grace. God didn't have to provide a means of growing character in people after the fall.

Church exists to manifest saving grace. God isn't obligated to save anybody who

is in rebellion toward Him after the fall.

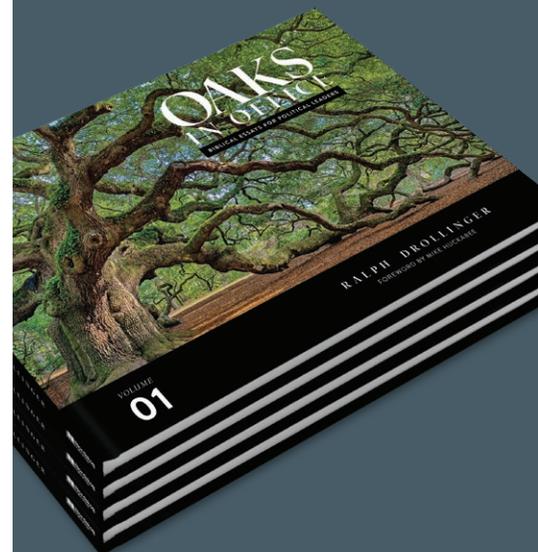
God is so good to us to manifest His grace and reign through these created-for-man institutions. Without them, our fallen world would be much more chaotic; to the degree we live informed by them and enact laws in accordance with them, is to the degree the world is less chaotic. These institutions are manifestations of His wonderful love and care for us whom He created and for whom He deeply loves!

Again, He has been gracious to provide us with each! He didn't have to, because in our fallenness we are undeserving! He is a God of order, and this represents divinely thought-out order! Lastly, keep in mind: each institution is more efficient than any other when it comes to doing what it does best.

Herein is how Christ intends to manifest His reign in the world today. These institutions represent His ongoing mediated authority in a fallen world, in His physical absence, prior to His second coming.

The better news, the great news, is that one day He *is* coming—what a glorious day that will be! Christ will someday reign from Jerusalem over the whole world! His physical, personal, non-mediated reign and His manifestation of authority will be perfect, without the stain of sin. What a wonderful day that will be! Are you ready for His return? Have you bowed your knee to His Lordship in every area of your life—including how you should legislate and form policy according to *His will*? Confess Him today as your Lord and Savior and legislate according to *His institutional construct*. He blesses those who are obedient to Him!

Next week in part 3, we examine what God's Word says about resource development. cm



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Dodoma, Tanzania
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Georgetown, Guyana
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Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Vilnius, Lithuania
Warsaw, Poland
Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire
Yaoundé, Cameroon

- 1 The Greek words translated “human institution,” *anthropine ktisei* ἀνθρωπινή κτίσει, are somewhat difficult to translate. The first Greek word is an adjective modifying the second, a noun, both in the dative case of the sentence (an indirect object). The Greek words literally and respectively mean: “characteristic of mankind” (in contrast to heavenly) and “what is created.” When used together they come to mean, “For mankind, what is created.” It is not the idea that the human created the institution, rather a creation by God for mankind, to mediate His reign in Christ’s physical absence. Further, one could argue that authority and submission relationships were necessitated by the fall (sin in the world) and that no need existed for authority and submission prior to the fall. This is commonly referred to in theology as the egalitarian viewpoint. Such however is negated by Paul’s rooting of husband and wife authority and submission in creation, not the fall (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:3–16; 1 Timothy 2:11–14). Institutional authority and submission, then, have to do with the mediatory reign of God in the world versus a remedy for sin, post fall.
- 2 A caveat to submission is the principle of Acts 4:19. The passage illustrates one in institutional authority demanding that one in submission to authority disobey a scriptural truth. Whenever a decree by one in authority in any of the five institutions is unequivocally in contradiction to one’s ability to obey God’s Word, then God’s Word must take precedent over the demands of the one in authority.
- 3 Historical evangelicalism has typically identified only three institutions ordained by God in the church age. If, however, an institution is characterized by the existence of an authority-submissive relationship, which seems to be the composite instruction of 1 Peter 2:13–15, then there are five institutions revealed in the NT. This would then be the difference between what I have deemed a “tritualist” versus a “pentetutitional” understanding of the mediatory reign of Christ in the church age. I am, as herein depicted, a “pentetutitionalist” (my words).
- 4 The critical importance of the church to accomplish its God-ordained task of making disciples necessitates that its work need go unhindered by the state. History proves that when the church is not under the control of the state, it is most effective.