

The 30-Year-Old Sermon That Could've Been Spoken This Past Sunday

In the mid-1980s, at the height of the Cold War, the battle between capitalism and communism was raging and the threat of socialism to American liberty and freedom was on the minds of many.

Against that backdrop, Dr. D. James Kennedy, founder of the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, laid out the case against socialism and the dangers that exist within the federal government in a sermon titled "Government: A Fearful Master." It is a sermon that just as easily could have been made this past weekend, even though Kennedy passed away nearly 10 years ago.

Dr. Frank Wright, president and CEO of D. James Kennedy Ministries, prefaced the sermon (see below) with this brief commentary:

"Most of us have heard of Murphy's Law. The shortened version goes something like this: 'If anything can go wrong, it will.' Perhaps you've felt like that on occasion—I know I have—but you may not be as well acquainted with some of Murphy's related propositions.

"For example, there is Murphy's First Corollary, which goes something like this: 'Left to themselves, things tend to go from bad to worse.' I think I've been there a time or two. Or, consider Murphy's Second Corollary, which goes like this: 'It is impossible to make something foolproof because fools are so ingenious.'

"Well, all of these expressions are conveying the notion that things often do not work out as originally planned or

intended. Civil government is actually a good example of that. God created civil government for our good—largely to protect our lives, our liberty and our property.

“But fallen men and women populate all governments, and history shows that when they exceed their legitimate authority, the inevitable outcome is something to be feared.”

Kennedy opens with a reading of Romans 13:1-5, and then quoted our nation’s first president, George Washington: “Government is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.”

“The Founders of this country were imbued with a biblical concept of government because there thundered forth from the pulpits of New England, and indeed from all of the states, the great teachings of the Word of God concerning government. Today, however, I’m afraid that these pulpits have been mostly silenced about these things, and consequently, whole generations have grown up without the foggiest idea of what God says about government, even indeed with the ignorant assumption that God has said nothing about government, and indeed He better not.

“But those that founded this nation knew God had a great deal to say about government, and the type of government that they attempted to establish was a government which was built upon those principles found in God’s Word.”

Kennedy’s 20-minute sermon, while short to serve the constraints of his television broadcast, was a powerful rebuke of government today, even though it was spoken three decades ago. And, it offered a powerful warning first uttered by the French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville:

“The American Republic will endure until the day Congress discovers that it can bribe the public with the public’s money.”