

Government or God? Humanism Versus the Kingdom, Part 1

Many good evangelical leaders believe big government is good as long as it aids people experiencing poverty, supports their nonprofit community programs and perpetuates what they define as social justice. These same leaders acknowledge the benefit of church tax-exempt status, and most operate with the ideology and theology handed down by their pastors and mentors. Some are dear friends serving as political leaders who see big government as a means to cure social ills.

This article presents fundamental ideals that may take decades to implement and will only become a reality if the church develops political and economic leaders with a biblical worldview as part of its cultural mission. In outlining these, my attempt is not to question the motives of anyone, nor is it to label what they support as evil. My heartfelt intent is to present some root differences between government social programs and the role of the church. I hope to help many understand why a large, centrally controlled state government rivals the kingdom of Christ.

In history, Cain built a city after he fell away from God (a city in this context implies a rival kingdom with its own set of laws, morals, economics and social values, Gen. 4:17). The men of Babel attempted to build a city with a tower to reach into heaven (to demonstrate their humanistic autonomy over the rule of God, Gen. 11). In each case, we find that God's judgment resulted in their autonomous human efforts collapsing.

The city, Babel, was named after God's judgment. The result of the judgment was that the people had to stop building the city and the tower. The diverse languages imposed by God fractured the unity of the people and scattered them throughout the

earth. Babel means “confusion by mixing,” whereby the men of the city could not sustain their forward motion to build. Our country must be wary of our attempt to build contrary to God’s purposes and kingdom pattern. God’s blessing upon any state or system of government is dependent upon the honor and worship due to Him.

In Exodus, God judged the Egyptians because of the economic bondage imposed upon His covenant people. Exodus 20:1 shows that God delivered the Israelites from the house of slavery so they could worship Him. This teaches us that economics (the ability to set your hours, own your property, support God’s work and make sacrifices to Him) and worship to God go hand in hand. It was not until the Israelites were freed that they were able to obey the first commandment (having no other gods before God). We then understand why God spoke to Pharaoh through Moses “to let my people go that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness” (Ex. 5:1b). God made it clear that any government attempting to control the economics of a people inhibits worship of the one true God, becomes a rival kingdom to the kingdom of God and will eventually experience the judgment of God.

This same principle in macro form was displayed when God showed the prophet Daniel that the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome were all rival kingdoms to be judged by God’s kingdom, which would eventually fill the whole earth (Dan. 2:31-35, 44-45; Daniel 7:15-18). God judged the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, whereby he acted like a beast for seven years until he acknowledged that “the Most High rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He chooses” (Dan. 4:25, 34-37).

These examples show our human tendency to build our kingdoms with our religious systems, morals, economics and gods to demonstrate our autonomy and throw off the restraints of the Most High God (Ps. 2). Please note that this has more to do with how we were created (to serve and worship) than morality

and being a “good person.” Even under the rule of Hitler or the Antichrist-like figure, Nero Caesar of Rome, it was still against the law to commit murder, steal and so forth. The existence of morality or social programs to aid the needy does not address the bottom line: the second of the Great Commandments (Ex. 20:3). Acknowledging His laws and reliance upon His providence is the bottom line.

Exploring the New Testament, we find that the primary reason Jesus was crucified was not because He preached a different religion but rather because He was a rival king. He inaugurated a new kingdom that rivaled the worship of Caesar and the Roman state. King Herod was troubled when King Jesus was born and attempted to kill him (Matt. 2:1-3, 16). The Jews convinced Pilate to crucify Jesus after they told him that if he released Jesus, he would not be a friend to Caesar (John 19:12-16). In John 18:35-38, Jesus told Pilate that His primary purpose on the earth was to come as a King (which fulfilled Ps. 2:8-9). Jesus called His followers the “ekklesia,” a Greek word equivalent to the Congress or Parliament, who would rule in His kingdom with Him as King of kings and assail the kingdoms (or gates) of the evil, demonically infected world system (Matt. 16:18, Rev, 19:16). Ultimately, the implications of the advent of Christ and His “ekklesia” demonstrate that His influence in culture cannot coexist with growing secular governments that infringe upon the biblical rights of His citizens.

Revelation 13 teaches us that the beast (representing the sizeable central government of the Roman Empire) was an enemy against the saints of God that stopped people from buying and selling unless they had the mark of the beast on their foreheads (a biblical metaphor to signify unison in thought and ideology with a large central humanistic government). Those looking for a literal mark of the beast in the future don’t realize that humanists have been dominating “buying and selling” and the economy in the USA and beyond since 1913 with

the creation of the Federal Reserve Bank, which controls interest rates and all central banks, thus controlling politics and the economy. {eo}

Watch for Part 2 of this article, coming soon to Charisma News.

Dr. Joseph Mattera is an internationally known author, consultant and theologian whose mission is to influence leaders who influence culture. He is the founding pastor of Resurrection Church and leads several organizations, including the U.S. Coalition of Apostolic Leaders and Christ Covenant Coalition. Dr. Mattera is the author of 13 bestselling books, including his latest, *The Purpose, Power and Process of Prophetic Ministry*, and is renowned for applying Scripture to contemporary culture.