

Kingdom Report

Week 19 May 2018

Koinonia Discipleship and Kingdom Government

I am continuing my reason why Koinonia discipleship is critical to the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth....and it has to do with how human government is no longer working and how the Lord governs in His Kingdom.

I introduced you last week to the idea that the Kingdom of God does not come by violence. You would think that this is obvious. There are two major streams of eschatology that talk about the coming Kingdom of God and both rely ultimately on a strategy of violence...i.e. the Kingdom comes by violence or coercion of people.

I will explain to you shortly what their strategy is but I need to just shortly encapsulate what I have said before about the government of God as to how it is structured:

- The Kingdom of God is by its very nature a family enterprise...you become part of this Kingdom through adoption into the family through the process of "rebirth". Which is why Jesus said that anybody that is in this Kingdom and the least in this Kingdom is greater than anybody that had ever been born on earth before His coming to establish the Kingdom of God.
- Secondly this Kingdom operates as a democratic republic meaning it is a rule of law with all family members allowed to participate in its ruling deliberations and all family members allowed to participate in its activities.
- The greatest laws of this family enterprise are the two greatest laws of the Kingdom...you will Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and being and you will love your neighbour as yourself. This law of love results in a citizenry of the Kingdom always seeking first the Kingdom of God agenda.
- There is therefore no coercion or violence towards fellow family members of the Kingdom... you came in of your own free will and you obey its laws out of love for the Father and His family.

If I am correct in my above assessment of how the Kingdom of God is run then you can see that learning and internalizing the two great laws of the Kingdom and making them the priority of your life is paramount and the best way that Jesus found to do that is through personal relationship discipleship....

Now the other two ways some folks in the church think this Kingdom can come about:

The most famous one is the "end time" Jesus comes in the clouds with the armies of heaven and at the Battle of Armageddon proceeds to slaughter a major portion of the earth's population including most of Russia, Iran, Turkey, the EU, Egypt, Libya, and a 200 million man army of Chinese. After this worldwide slaughter of billions of people He sets up a new earth administration centred in Jerusalem.

The other is the "dominionist" idea that Christians infiltrate the governments of the earth and set about ruling the earth with "Christian governments". This has been popularized through books like "The Seven Mountain Prophecy" and others.

I am not even going to comment on the first idea of how Jesus establishes His Kingdom. I would think that the idea that He returns and established a restored Jewish kingdom with Himself as king ruling the world from Jerusalem and slaughtering all the enemies of Israel....well I thought that idea went down in flames in 70 AD. But evangelical "stand with Israel" types are still fantasizing that kind of Kingdom of God.

Let me tell you why the second idea of "Christian government" also is not the same as Kingdom government...it is still in the final analysis government by force and coercion. Now let me say in defence of this idea...it is far better to have righteous men and women in authority than sinners and evil doers. And I believe that there are people called to government work and they are there placed by the Lord....please refer in the Bible to Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, Esther in Persia etc.

But here is the problem that all world governments are facing now and it is insoluble. I will quote extensively from John Whitehead's new book "**Battlefield America: The War on the American People**"...."*the American people get duped, deceived, double-crossed, cheated, lied to, swindled and conned into believing that the government and its army of bureaucrats—the people we appointed to safeguard our freedoms—actually have our best interests at heart.*"

His point is applicable to all governments and their relationship with citizens. I quote him further to illustrate the point....

We labor today under the weight of countless tyrannies, large and small, carried out in the name of the national good by an elite class of government officials who are largely insulated from the ill effects of their actions, and inflicted on an overtaxed, overregulated, and underrepresented populace.

Consider, for example, that federal and state governments now require - on penalty of a fine - that individuals apply for permission before they can grow exotic orchids, host elaborate dinner parties, gather friends in one's home for Bible studies, give coffee to the homeless, let their kids manage a lemonade stand, keep chickens as pets, or braid someone's hair, as ludicrous as that may seem.

A current case before the Supreme Court Niang v. Tomblinson, , strikes at the heart of this bureaucratic exercise in absurdity that has pushed overregulation and over criminalization to outrageous limits. This particular case is about whether one needs a government license in order to braid hair.

In Missouri, anyone wanting to braid African-style hair and charge for it must first acquire a government license, which at a minimum requires the applicant to undertake at least 1500 hours of cosmetology classes costing tens of thousands of dollars. Tennessee has fined residents nearly \$100,000 just for violating its laws against braiding hair without a government license.

It's not just hair braiding that has become grist for the overregulation mill.

Almost every aspect of American life today - especially if it is work-related - is subject to this kind of heightened scrutiny and ham-fisted control, whether you're talking about aspiring "bakers, braiders, casket makers, florists, veterinary masseuses, tour guides, taxi drivers, eyebrow threaders, teeth whiteners, and more."

For instance, whereas 70 years ago, one out of every 20 U.S. jobs required a state license, today, almost 1 in 3 American occupations requires a license.

The problem of overregulation has become so bad that, as one analyst notes, "getting a license to style hair in Washington takes more instructional time than becoming an emergency medical technician or a fire fighter."

This is what happens when bureaucrats run the show, and the rule of law becomes little more than a cattle prod for forcing the citizenry to march in lockstep with the government.

Overregulation is just the other side of the coin to over-criminalization, that phenomenon in which everything is rendered illegal and everyone becomes a lawbreaker.

This is the mindset (in Florida) that tried to penalize a fisherman with 20 years' jail time for throwing fish that were too small back into the water and subjected a 90-year-old man to arrest for violating an ordinance that prohibits feeding the homeless in public.

From Jacob....to Israel

The Lord has a solution to this problem of bureaucracy gone mad. Instead of the law on the outside forcing people to behave....His plan of Kingdom government is to place the law in our hearts to where it is our nature to obey His law.

His second solution is to simplify thousands of thousands of laws to two basic laws...love the Lord with all your heart and all your soul and love your neighbour as your self.

This is the idea behind the concept of "ISRAEL"

Israel in Hebrew stands for:

"Ish" = Man

"Ra" = Rule

"El" = Lord

or...."a man ruled by the Lord".

That is what happened to Jacob....after his loss of all his worldly goods to his brother Esau and wrestling with the angel of the Lord all night....the Lord crippled him and changed his name from Jacob to Israel...a born again man, new name, new nature.

Israel of old could read the hundreds of laws in the law of Moses, but they could not get it into their hearts. What did the Lord do to Israel, what was His plan?

First He sold them into slavery to what the scripture in prophecy refers to as "beast nations"....Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome...if they could not live the law of God from their hearts then He made them live under the laws of gentile nations.

Then the Kingdom of God came in Christ. Jesus did not try to reform the laws of Rome or change the harsh Roman government. He said..."You must be born again..." "I in you, you in me".

He came to place His law of love in our hearts. But the church did not really learn that lesson of discipleship...the process by which the law of love comes forth in a person's life.

So the Lord did to His Church what He did with Israel....He sold them into slavery to new world gentile "beast empires". You suffer under man's laws and man's kings and their bureaucrats and their systems until we the Church learn how the Kingdom of God's laws operate and can practice them

That is why He said go into all the world and "make disciples"then when we have done that then we can have God's Kingdom rule in all the earth. Because until we learn how to be true "Israelites" people who are ruled in our hearts by the Lord, then we will remain under the powers of oppressive governments.

And make no mistake about it...the only final means that the governing powers of the world have to keep order are hundreds of thousands of laws to make everyone behave and the power of force and coercion and guns and prison to enforce those laws...and God has given them the right to do that. And it does not make a difference if you have Christians in that government...they must still rule a sinful people by thousands of laws and force and coercion.

So you want to see Jesus come and His Kingdom come and His will done on earth as it is in heaven? well then lets get on with the job of discipleship....that process by which we establish committed relationships with people who will love us and help us to love with the love of God. It is not easy and it is not quick.

But a good place to start is as Jesus did...with 12 people in your living room and a commitment to one another to love each other into Kingdom maturity....."until we come into the full stature of the son of God."

Then we can get on with the vast exponential growth of the Church as the Kingdom of God without the drag and baggage of bureaucrats and coercive government and endless corruption, waste, low productivity, high cost overheads, wasteful taxation and all the other needless baggage that comes with people who cannot love God or their neighbour and are not seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

And we don't need Jesus in Jerusalem with an army of angels bashing people to behave....we need Jesus in the hearts of the people loving them into Kingdom obedience.