

## **WHEN KINGDOMS COLLIDE #7**

### **Introduction**

Let me begin with a question: Which country on earth woke up to these “Breaking News” stories over the past 3 months?

### **Breaking News**

- **Government shuts down Christian church services**
- **Pastors who continue to hold meetings will be arrested**
- **Churches warned that If public meetings are once again permitted, gatherings will be limited to 25 people**
- **If church services resume, strict social distancing will be required**

Are these headlines from Communist China? Russia? A Muslim nation?  
No, these are news story from the United States of America!  
And I believe there will be more to come. Why? Because...

**The Corona virus crisis is exposing us to a danger deadlier than the disease:  
The coming collision of the kingdoms of man with the Kingdom of God.  
The question for Christians will be, “Will we know how to handle it?”**

The Lord is directing me to take the next few weeks to equip you to know what to do when kingdoms collide; what do we do when the commandments of men conflict with the commandments of God.

### **3 THINGS TO KNOW**

- 1. Christians have an obligation to honor civil government and obey the law**
- 2. However, our obligation to obey the law and the authority of civil government ends when doing so would clearly contradict the authority of God’s law or our Christian conscience.**
- 3. When the kingdoms of men collide with the Kingdom of God, we must obey God rather than men.**

## **I. When Kingdoms Collide**

### **A. Christians Have Clear Cut Obligations to the Civil Government**

1. When we hear the term “the government” most of us think of civil government; but Christians need to know that all government is ordained of God.

2. God has ordained 3 institutions or ‘spheres’ of Government and commanded that we honor those in authority in each sphere.

### **3 Institutions (or Spheres) of Government:**

- **Family government’**
- **Church government**
- **Civil government**

a.. The bedrock of human society is the family and God has established the proper order for family government: the Father is the “head” of the home; the Mother is his “helper”; the children in respectful obedience to their parents.

b. God has ordained church government; ruled by ‘elders’; He established a 5 fold servant leadership; Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

3. But in Romans 13, the Apostle Paul speaks specifically on how Christians are to relate to the civil government that He has ordained. He begins with a command to OBEY:

#### **Romans 13:1 NKJV**

**Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities.**

#### **Rom 13:1 NLT**

**Everyone must submit to governing authorities.**

4. In the next verse he tells us why:

#### **Romans 13:2**

**For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.**

a. God has ordained all the spheres of government; all authority they have is delegated by God; so to resist or disobey God’s appointed authority is to resist or disobey God!

- This is true in the family: when children dishonor or disobey their parents

- This is true in the Church
- And it also true in civil government-not just ‘good’ ones!

5. Remember Paul was writing to the church at Rome when Nero, one of the most evil leaders who ever lived, was on the throne!

a. Jesus Himself modeled submission to civil authority at His trial before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate.

**John 19:8-11**

**8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, 9 and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.**

**John 19:10-11 NLT**

**10 Pilate therefore said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above...."**

b. If Paul told the Christians in Rome to obey the government of Nero, and Jesus submitted Himself to the authority of an evil governor in Jerusalem, then the same principle applies to Christians today.

6. Paul goes on to explain that God appoints civil government for our good.

**Romans 13:4-5 NLT**

**The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.**

7. Obedience to civil government includes paying our taxes.

**Romans 13:6-7**

**Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. 7 Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.**

a. Once again, Jesus modeled submission to the civil government in the matter of taxes in Matthew 17, Mark 12 and Luke 20.

8. So our first point is that Christians have clear cut obligations related to civil government. As one said: To pray, pay, and obey.

- Pray for our Leaders

### **1 Timothy 2:1-2**

**Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.**

- Pay our taxes
- Obey the Law

9. God has given us these 3 obligations; but that brings us to our 2<sup>nd</sup> point:

### **3 Points**

**1. Christians have certain, clearly defined obligations to civil government.  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Point)**

**B. However, Our Obligation to Obey Civil Law Ends When Obedience Requires Disobedience to God's Law**

1. When the Corona virus came on the scene, it seemed so natural to us that the government would take steps to protect the American people from this deadly, invisible enemy.

- They told us to wash our hands
- Avoid direct physical contact with others
  - Stay at home if possible

2. So far so good. We all wanted to protect ourselves and others from catching the disease. But then the Federal and local governments did what governments always do; suggestions became demands. We are faced with...

### **Government Overreach**

- Business considered 'non-essential' were ordered to shut down
- Travel restrictions imposed by law
- Worst of all for Christians, churches were forbidden to meet

(Hint of trouble: liquor stores could remain open but churches were shut down.)

3. Government overreach in shutting down churches was not only a violation of the constitutional right of free assembly, it was a clear collision of 2 Kingdoms for Christians because God has commanded us to assemble!

### **Hebrews 10:24-25**

**And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**

a. Many milk toast Christians never took this seriously anyway; American church culture considers faithful church attendance a personal choice.

b. But for those of us who take God seriously, the conflict of Kingdoms was clear.

4. In spite of that, most churches, including our own, temporarily cancelled services. Some churches ignored the shutdown and continued to meet and the Pastors were actually arrested. The media made fun of them. Even many of their fellow Christians disapproved. But what were they really doing?

### **Does It Bother You?**

- Does it not bother us that the government has shut down the churches, a clear violation of our constitutional right to assemble?
- Does it not bother us that allowing the government has forced us to do what God told us to do?
- Does it bother us that accepting this degree of government control of the churches may open the door for even more regulation of the church by the State in the future?

- Does it bother us that we have allowed more government control of our lives over the past 3 months than it has ever had in all 225 previous years?

### **Review**

- 1. Christians have certain, clearly defined obligations to civil government.**
- 2. However, our obligation to obey the law and submit to the authority of civil government ends when doing so would clearly contradict the authority of God's law or our Christian conscience.**  
**And the final point...**

### **C. When the Kingdoms of Men Collide With the Kingdom of God We Must Obey God Rather Than Men**

1. We honor government and obey the law; up until obeying man's law requires us to break God's law.

2. When that becomes the case, I want to make a biblical case for civil disobedience. When man's law collides with God's law, we are right to disobey.

#### **Acts 5:27-29**

**And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?"**

**But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."**

- a. We see the same principle in Acts 4:

#### **Acts 4:18-20**

**So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."**

3. Other biblical examples of civil disobedience:

- a. In the book of Exodus, Pharaoh commanded the midwives to kill all male babies born to the Hebrews; the first recorded post-birth abortions.

**Exodus 1:17**

**But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.**

**Exodus 1:18-19**

**So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?"**

**And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them."**

b. If the midwives had obey the law Moses never would have been born!

**Exodus 1:20**

**Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty. And so it was, because the midwives feared God that He provided households for them.**

c. In the Book of Daniel, the King commanded the Hebrew children to bow down and worship his golden image; but they refused.

**Daniel 3:13-15**

**13 Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. 14 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? 15 Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"**

**Daniel 3:16-17**

**16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. 18 But if not, let it be**

**known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."**

- When kingdoms collided, they chose to obey God rather than men and were thrown into the fiery furnace-but they came out alive.

d. A little later, in Daniel 6, the King commanded that no prayer be made by anyone but himself for 30 days; but Daniel's enemies turned him in:

#### **Daniel 6:13**

**So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."**

- When kingdoms collided, Daniel chose to obey God rather than men. He was thrown into the lion's den but God shut the mouth of the lions.

#### **Daniel 6:22**

**Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."**

- These men are models of how God's people respond to unrighteous laws in a pagan culture
- They obeyed God rather than men; and God delivered them from the fiery furnace and the lion's den
- The lesson is...

4. God commands us to obey the civil government; up to the point where our obedience to man would require disobedience to God; at that point he will bless the disobedient!

### **III. Conclusion**

#### **A. Changing Times**

1. My first experience with the collision of 2 kingdoms as a Pastor came when I was confronted **with the so-called "Johnson Amendment";**

a. **The Johnson Amendment is a provision in the tax code (still in effect today) that prohibits churches from endorsing or opposing political candidates.**

b. Pastors are warned this could also include preaching on political issues.

c. I made a choice, the 1<sup>st</sup> year I was in ministry, to preach what God told me to preach; never to fear man or any law of man that contradicted the law of God.

2. I honor authority: pray for the leaders, pay my taxes, and obey the law. Until I can't. The Johnson Amendment was a kind of 'no-brainer' for me.

3. But the current Corona virus crisis has complicated things; the lines are blurred. Government overreach is everywhere.

**Fox News, 5/5/20**

**Two Massachusetts cities threaten \$1,000 fine for citizens not wearing a mask in public.**

4. There are ungodly forces at work following the Socialist playbook policies of Saul Alinsky, who famously said...

**Saul Alinsky**

**"Never let a crisis go to waste."**

5. Unscrupulous political parties are using the corona crisis as an excuse to expand governmental control over every area of our lives: and many Christians are OK with it.

**Mario Murillo**

**"They are coming after your freedom. They will force feed your children the antichrist agenda. That is, unless we wake up to our purpose and destiny."**

6. God appointed the Church to be the prophetic voice of God that holds civil government accountable. We have not been that voice. But that can change.

**Mario Murillo**

**"My cry is that when the church doors reopen the Spirit-filled churches will leave Sesame Street and come back to Azusa Street."**

7. In other words, the awakening of the church could be the silver lining in the Corona crisis! If it happens, we will get our voice back to speak up when Kingdoms collide.

8. We will dive deeper into this next week but let me close with this thought.

- Ahab was one of Israel's wickedest kings; he surrounded himself with many false prophets, religious leaders who only spoke good of him; But he sent for Micaiah, a true prophet of God and the king's men warned him...

**1 Kings 22:13-14**

**13 Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king.**

**Please, let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak encouragement."**

**14 And Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak."**

**Let this be our word: when kingdoms collide, to obey God rather than men!**

**Prayer**

**Offering**

**Title**