

Christ in Law

by Aaron Rock

This sermon delves into the importance of understanding the relationship between God's law and civil law, emphasizing the foundational role of biblical principles in shaping societal laws. It highlights the need to recognize God as the ultimate lawgiver and the importance of obeying civil laws while discerning when they conflict with divine laws. The sermon underscores the significance of upholding God's moral standards in the face of societal challenges and the potential consequences of deviating from His laws.

Scripture: Proverbs 22:28, Romans 13:1, Genesis 1:26, Genesis 9:6, Romans 3:23, Judges 21:25, Matthew 27:11, Revelation 17:14, Psalm 139:23, Genesis 1:28, Romans 6:19

Topics: "God's Law vs. Civil Law", "Upholding Moral Standards"

Description

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Transcript

The title of the message today is Christ in Law. Now, two years ago, if you came to church, it probably would have seemed kind of strange if the pastor said, hey, guess what we're going to preach on today? We're going to preach on law. We're going to preach on law and culture.

We're going to preach on law in Canada. You'd be like, why are we talking about this? After all, what does that have to do with the gospel? What does that have to do with worship? What does law have to do with everyday life? Well, things have changed and we're thinking about law a lot, are we not? People are asking questions like, am I required as a Christian to obey the law of the land if it conflicts with my conscience? Or why is it that I suddenly feel rather unprotected by Canadian law? Why are there laws that would appear that politicians foist upon us but do not abide by themselves? How would we process that? Some people are asking, hey, I'm in law enforcement and I'm struggling with what laws I am required to enforce. Others are asking, why is it that unelected officials seem to have so much power, maybe even more power than elected officials over the formulation of laws in our culture? How do we process all of this? Well, let's start off with a very basic definition.

What is law? Law essentially is composed of a system of rules that govern our behavior as a society, a system of rules that govern our behavior. Now in the West, and when we say West, because everybody's West of someone else, we live in a sphere. But when we say West, what we're talking about are those cultures, those countries, those nations that historically had a Christian foundation.

Doesn't mean that everyone was ever entirely Christian, we understand that, but they had a certain Christianized, we call them Christianized countries. There was a recognition of the supremacy of God. There was a recognition that law should in some way, shape, or form be based upon biblical law.

So in Western nations, historically, our laws were largely rooted in biblical law or ecclesiastical law, canon law. The shape, the structures, and systems within that were based primarily on Roman law. So the idea of case law, or how contracts are written, or the notion of legal precedents, those come not so much from the scripture, but those structures, those organizational mechanisms within legal codes and Western nations are mostly based upon Roman law from the Emperor Justinian.

But the moral foundation of Western nations really has historically been built off of and based on, and even vetted by, biblical law, from one end of the Bible to the other, by the way. So we have law, and law in culture is used to enforce a particular moral code. So for example, no, you can't murder people.

No, you can't steal other people's property. That's immoral. We recognize that in our nation.

And then we have organizational law, civil structures within law, and those are not necessarily moral. Some of them are, some of them aren't. But for example, somebody has to circle a date on the calendar and say, this is when your tax returns have to be submitted.

Whether it's the end of March, end of April, or end of May, the Bible doesn't say. But those are the civil structures that we put in place, or the way a contract's written. And yet, in fact, you have to sign it, and date it, and maybe have a witness.

These aren't moral issues. Whether you're signing five documents to buy a piece of property, or three documents to buy a piece of property, the Bible doesn't speak of those things. So we have moral law, and we have civil law, and they sort of come together and shape the law of every nation.

Now while there are many ways to shape civil laws, nations, we know, that are founded upon God's laws are a blessing to the world. And by the way, when I say God's laws, don't think, oh, Levitical law? Oh, how to butcher a goat? How to offer your sacrifice? I'm not talking about law like Levitical. I'm talking about all the principles, commands, promises of God from Genesis right through to Revelation.

The laws of God. The righteous statutes and decrees of God. The whole of the Bible.

Biblical law. So if you look at immigration patterns over the past hundred years, nobody's fleeing to atheistic countries. Nobody's fleeing to countries ruled by Sharia law, Islamic countries.

If people want to move, they want to move to, whether they know it or not, Western countries that are founded largely upon Biblical law. Because what's unique about Western nations is they historically have stood for freedom of worship. They encourage you to actually work and bring your money home and keep it for yourself, rather than in communism being told you have to work and you're not getting paid.

For example, I was with a young Romanian couple yesterday and they were telling me when their parents grew up in Romania, they would be conscripted at times to go and pick corn and you didn't get paid for it. You just did it because it's supposed to be patriotic to pick corn for the nation. So you're working but you're not getting paid.

Nobody wants to live in countries like that. However, we've seen a shift and a very rapid shift in the last several years and that people are starting to think, I'd like to get out of my Western country too. Because they're clearly not basing their laws upon Biblical law and now we have a rise of tyranny and dictatorships and property confiscation and freezing of bank accounts and all sorts of threats, potential stripping of charitable status from churches.

The problem is where do you run to? If there's no nation basing their laws upon the word of God, you kind of feel like a rat in a cage, right? You can't get out. So this is the state of our world. Now when we talk about bringing God's law to bear on civil law, we want to be clear on this point.

We're not talking about bringing heaven to earth. We understand this world will always be imperfect. There's always going to be a measure of evil.

There's always going to be a measure of impurity. There's always going to be some tyranny here and there. There's always going to be someone drunk on power.

But we at least want to push back against evil, to push the darkness back and to create cultures within which there's freedom to worship. There's freedom to raise your family, to actually say, I have authority over my kids, not the public school system. To be able to have freedom to worship, freedom to raise your family, and freedom to work, to seek gainful employment without the government taking it all from you.

So here's the thing, folks. Every nation, every nation has a God. Every nation.

They may not call it a God. But what we're actually talking about when we're discussing matters of law is we're discussing authority, essentially is what we're discussing. Who's your authority? Law equals authority.

And the battle that is raging in the West, and in fact all around the world today, is really a battle that revolves around the question, who will rule us? What king, what prime minister, what president, what parliament, what legislature has ultimate authority over our lives? Who will rule us? Now, I was curious to have received several questions in the past couple of years from people and through my podcast and through my correspondence with people. Oftentimes, I'll have someone send me a message or an email, and they'll say something like, you know, I like what you're talking about, but what about the fact that Jesus wasn't political? Jesus wasn't political. So why is it that so often politics kind of seems to creep into your sermons? And why is your church so politically engaged? Good question, right? Well, the answer to this is to ask a question back.

What is politics? Politics fundamentally is about governance and power, is it not? It's essentially about governance and power. Did Jesus ever happen to have anything to say about governance and power? Jesus was the most political person to ever walk the face of the planet. Jesus was highly interested in matters of governance and power.

In fact, he was nailed to a cross for claiming to be king of the Jews, which offended both the Jews and the Romans. It says in Matthew 27, 11, now Jesus stood before the governor and the governor asked, hey,

what was your last sermon, Jesus? No. He asks him a very political question.

Are you the king of the Jews? And Jesus is like, oh, no, you got me wrong. No, no, no. Wrong guy.

I don't get involved in politics. No, Jesus said, you have said so, which is his way of saying yes in kind of a style that's unique to Jesus. Now, this isn't a blip in scripture.

In Revelation 17, 14, in the apocalyptic vision of what is yet to come, it says they, that is the rulers of the world, will make war with the lamb, that is Christ, and the lamb will conquer them. Listen to this. For he is lord of lords and king of kings and those who are called and chosen and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.

Well, Jesus declares himself to be king of kings and lord of lords. So Jesus declares himself to be the ruler of all political establishments and all political systems. If you're a king, you're a politician.

If you're a lord, you're a politician, but you have a boss to answer to. And your boss is not the democratic will of the people. Your boss is God through Christ.

In that respect, if you understand the politics about governance and power, Jesus was incredibly political. He claimed to have authority in this world and in the next over every throne, every ruler, every principality, and every power. The problem is, for the last several hundred years, most of the Christian church has been sort of dualistic in their thinking.

Let's just about getting to heaven, man. Let's just get to heaven. And we've reduced the gospel down to the salvation message, which is incredibly important.

It's central to the message of Christ. But if we call an individual to repent of their sins and make Christ their lord, but we don't help them to understand that Christ is actually lord of everything, it's kind of a weird gospel. It's not a biblical gospel.

So the gospel brought the broadest definition of the gospel is about the rule of God through Christ. He is king of kings and lord of lords, and we don't have to wait for heaven for him to qualify as such. He is the lord of your life right now, whether you acknowledge it or not.

He is the lord of the parliament of our nation, whether they acknowledge it or not. He is the lord of every mayor in Essex County and beyond, whether they acknowledge him or not. He's the king of kings and the lord of lords.

And therefore, if he is the ultimate king, follow my logic, then he's the ultimate authority over law. He's the ultimate determinant of what's right and wrong. He's the ultimate one who decides how we act, how we live, and how we conduct ourselves.

Because he's not a micro king, he's the king of kings and the lord of lords. Now one of the questions that's often raised when you start to speak about God's law is, doesn't preaching God's law diminish grace and diminish the gospel? This is the fear that many have. So if we start going around in culture and saying to prime ministers and parliaments and neighbors and friends and family, actually Christ is the king of kings and the lord of lords, and his laws are binding upon you and you need to follow his laws, aren't we sort of preaching a gospel of works? Aren't we falling into the trap of maybe communicating to them that if you just do this, do that, do this, do that, and do this, and do that, that you're going to get to heaven? So

there's an apparent conflict that people set up.

Are we about grace and the gospel, or are we about law and works? Well, there's no conflict at all in the scripture. We obviously understand very well as biblical Christians that you don't get to heaven by obeying God's laws, but you do go to hell by breaking them. And so you need to understand what God's laws and expectations are.

Law doesn't exclude grace. In fact, law preaching rightness and wrongness is a prerequisite to even understanding what grace is. Why do I need mercy if I'm perfect? Why do I need to be saved if I'm already fine? So we preach the moral word of God into culture in order to remind people, first of all, that they're sinners and they're in need of a savior.

And I don't think we've done a very good job of that in all honesty in the modern church, because the temptation is to go to church and we immediately want to go to grace, mercy, and love, right? And heaven. But God forbid if we preach hell, hellfire and brimstone, sin, that adultery is actually a sin still even in 2022, that fornication is still a sin in 2022, that lying and cheating is still a sin in 2022. We want to get to the good stuff because that feels good, but actually it doesn't feel that good if you don't know where you came from.

So we preach God's word into culture in order to help people to see that they're sinners in need of a savior. But secondly, we preach God's words, God's laws into culture because God's laws actually restrain or constrain evil. Let me give you an example of this.

In our country we have no abortion laws. So therefore 85,000 Canadian babies are butchered in our country in the womb every year. Why? Because we don't have any laws that restrain that behavior.

If we had laws that restrain that behavior, wouldn't that be a good thing? If we could reduce the number to zero, that would be great. But even if we could reduce it by half, that'd be better than 85,000 babies being butchered every year. But we have no law.

And yet in the modern church, especially over the past two years, you're going to get more flack bumping into a Christian at Home Depot if you're not wearing a mask in violation of a provincial statute than you are likely to ever hear them weep and wail and picket and protest against 85 million babies that are being butchered in our country every year. And what's the notion? You got to obey the law, Pastor Rock. If our premier says it, you're responsible to obey it.

But we don't have laws to govern the sanctity of life in the womb. And many people have just given up on that. So obviously, salvation presupposes sin.

The Bible says, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, Romans 3.23. But we also preach God's laws, God's word. And again, I'm not talking about Levitical law. I'm not talking about the dietary laws, although some of them are pretty good, actually.

But I'm not talking about preaching those in the culture as some sort of legalistic mechanism to bind people to it, but to restrain evil. But again, many Christians are more religious about keeping civil law than they are religious about keeping religious law. And when civil law violates religious law, we have a responsibility to disobey civil law.

Erwin Lutzer, as he comments on what took place in the events, the decades leading up to the Holocaust, he's... Someone gave me a book this week, which is a pretty interesting book, sort of written back in 2010.

I thought it was written like yesterday. But it's talking about a lot of the cultural issues that we're dealing with, and he's tying it into some of the things we saw in Nazi Germany.

And he says in his book, and I'll just quote here, quote, the experience of Nazi Germany reminds us that whoever controls a nation's laws also controls a nation's agenda and values. Interesting. You control the laws, you control the values.

So what were some of the laws that were put in place before the Holocaust? The people had to be propagandized. People had to slowly warm up to the idea. Their worldview had to be shifted in shape.

So coming out of World War II, there was a major inferiority complex in Germany. They lost the war. They were under sanctions.

And so Hitler comes along, and he starts printing money. And of course, it's basically worth nothing, like our money. I saw a little thing on Facebook this week.

It's like the new Canadian \$20 bill, and it's the \$100 bill. Our money's not worth that much because they're just printing it, printing it. It's not backed by anything.

It's just plastic. That's what Hitler did, just started printing money. You could take a billion mark bill and throw it out because it's worth nothing.

So they had all these issues in their nation. So what he did is he had this slow propaganda campaign. And believe it or not, he identified a group of people called the Jews, and he started calling them things like undesirables, kind of like fringe minority.

And he started putting laws upon them. So he deprived Jews of citizenship, kind of like, wouldn't it be crazy if in Canada, you could be a citizen and you were deprived of some of your charter rights? Could you imagine if you were barred from leaving the country, for example, or barred from going to church or barred from opening your business? That would never happen here though, right? So he put restraints upon their ability to live as full citizens. He outlawed intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews.

He called that unnatural. And get this, he made criticizing Hitler treasonous. So you can't fly obscene flags, for example, that demonstrate your dislike for Hitler.

And by the way, I'm not a fan of them. But you might've seen in Ottawa, they barred those obscene flags from being flown, sort of trash talking Hitler. The same people that are enforcing that are totally fine with scantily clad naked people on almost every television show you can watch.

So this kind of obscenity is okay with us. This isn't because it's a threat to the political establishment. And then that led up ultimately to the massacre of 8 million Jewish people and non-Jewish people that were all lumped into this undesirable category.

This set the stage for the Holocaust. So if you can control the laws, you can control the propaganda, you control the writing of the textbooks, you control the universities, you control what can be taught and what can't be taught, and you control the economic system outside of God's law, you can get people to do some incredibly horrendous things. So it's not a one for one, I get that.

What we're going through is not a one for one to the Holocaust, but we need to learn from history. And when a nation abandons God's laws in the area of economics, abandons God's laws in the area of the

value of human life, abandons God's laws by starting to segregate and separate families and churches and people groups, you set up a nation for collapse. You set up a nation to do some despicable things.

So the laws of the land, there are laws in our land that are morally neutral. Again, should we submit our taxes by April 30th, April 15th, May 15th, let the government decide that, who cares? It's not a big deal. But many are founded upon a nation's answer to the question, who will rule us? Who will be our God? Our charter claims that we believe in the supremacy of God.

But I think they've almost inserted a footnote that said, oh, P.S., the God that we're referring to is the state. The state decides what's right and wrong, who can marry, what the definition of marriage is, who can worship, who can't worship, who can speak out, who can't speak out, who's guilty of disinformation, who's guilty of proper information. Every nation is a God of sorts upon which its laws derive.

We falsely, many of us, if you're kind of my age-ish or younger, maybe even a little older, probably all of us, we have falsely been taught that secularism is the perfect neutral ground for all religious faiths to flourish, right? Secularism is morally neutral. Secularism is not morally neutral at all. Secularism puts the power in the hands of the state.

And that's what we have seen in our own country. So in Canada, the fight is, we're not fighting against mask mandates. I hope you understand that.

We're not fighting against social distancing mandates fundamentally. We're not fundamentally fighting against percentages in churches. We're fighting against the question, who will be our God? And what are the limits that God has put upon the state to govern people? So is man or God the source of law? Well, before the kings were put in place in Israel, you remember, they begged for a king.

First it was Abraham, then he had a son who had a son, and then they sort of started to reproduce. They took the creational mandate pretty seriously. And there was a lot of them that freaked out Pharaoh when he pushed him into slavery.

And they ran from Egypt, and they got a land of their own. And for a period of time, they didn't really have a civil structure. It was just sort of an ad hoc governance system.

Whoever sort of stood the tallest, yelled the loudest, became the judge, became the ruler. And there were some pretty interesting characters that led the nation of Israel, but eventually they had a kingship put in place. But before they had the kings, Israel had a legal code.

It was sort of like their charter, the 10 commandments. There were 600 other commandments, but there was the top 10. And those top 10 commandments were the supreme summary of all of God's laws for the nation.

Now, ideally, they would have consulted God directly for every decision that they made. But in a fallen world, that doesn't generally work very well. So God permitted them, as an accommodation to human sinfulness, to set up a monarchy.

And the role of the monarch, the king, was to consult God, to be a theocratic king, a king on God's behalf. Under the judges, they had a problem. An example of this is recorded in Judges 21-25.

In those days, there was no king in Israel. And everyone did what was right in his own eyes. Just kind of made up the law for themselves.

So ideally, that would have worked if everyone's in tune with God and everyone's directly dialoguing with God. You wouldn't need a king. You wouldn't need pastors.

You wouldn't need police officers. Everyone's just sort of following God. But in a broken world, it doesn't work that way.

So God puts this layer in called civil government. So then when people, when Jesus, later on in the New Testament, calls people lawless, some of you are lawless. What was he referring to? What kind of lawlessness? People are lawless.

What do you mean? You mean they're riding their donkeys too fast through the streets, breaking the speed limit? No, they were lawless in that they were violating God's divine law. They'd forsaken God's moral law. This is why Paul, later on in Romans 6-19, said, I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations.

We're all limited in our knowledge and understanding. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, moral lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. In other words, there's expectations that God has placed upon us for our conduct.

And he's reminding us here that there's a standard upon which human thought and behavior is expected to conform. So we can't, when we think of God's law, reduce it down to dietary laws or speed limits or whatever it might be. God's laws encompass all that God legislates, and God has a lot to say in his divine legislation.

From a Christian perspective, this is fundamental to all of us. God is the ultimate law giver. God is the ultimate law giver.

And any law or rule or edict that we put in place in any sphere of life cannot contradict God's law. A husband who's the spiritual leader over his wife can never ask his wife to do something that violates God's law. She can say, no sir.

A pastor who has authority over the church can never ask his people to do something that violates God's law. They can say, hey, thank you, but no thank you. And citizens are not obliged to follow laws put in place by civil authorities that violate God's law, because God is the ultimate determiner of what's right and what is wrong.

Now he does delegate authority. As he delegates authority, parents over their children, husbands over their wives, elders over churches, governments and kings over nations. He delegates authority to civil rulers in order to help us have a properly ordered society.

But listen to this. Anyone who's in a position of authority is a servant of God. You're a king? Yeah, but you're not the king of kings.

You're a father? Yeah, but you're not the father of fathers. You're a pastor? Yeah, but you're not the great pastor of the church. Ultimate authority is reserved for God alone.

This is why in Romans 13, which has become the new John 3.16 in the last couple of years, it's very clear. It says, for rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Oh, there's moral language.

Who decides what's good and what's bad? The parliament through a vote? No, no, God decides what's good and what's bad. Would you have no fear of one who's in authority? Then do what is good and you'll receive his approval. Listen to this, for he is God's servant for your good.

He's God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid for he does not bear the sword in vain, which is a symbol of public justice presiding over the courts, the military, police services. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the evildoer.

This is really critical to understand this. When a ruler pours out his wrath upon the citizenry, he must always do it and he's constrained to do it in accordance with the wrath that God wants poured out on them. A ruler is not authorized to pour out his wrath upon a pastor trying to gather his people to minister the word and sacrament.

You're not God's deacon when you're doing that work. You're not God's deacon when you're saying to this group of people, you can't open your business because that's bad. But if you're a big tech, big corp, we're going to let you open your business.

And if you do open your business, small business owner, we're going to fine you or confiscate your property. You're not God's deacon. You're a tyrant.

You're claiming to be the king of kings and the lord of lords. It says, therefore, one must be in subjection not only to avoid God's wrath, but also for the sake of conscience. So it's very clear in this passage that the biblical idea is that people who are in positions of authority, including rulers and kings serve under God as God's deacons, as God's servants.

If God says it's right, then they reward the righteous. If God says it's wrong, then they punish the evildoer. But what they don't do is reward the evildoer and punish the righteous.

When they do that, they violated their job description. They've stepped outside of the boundaries of their authority. However, not understanding this and having sort of a reductionistic mindset, many Christians are far more concerned in the modern era with enforcing civil laws, many of which have now been proven after two years to be fraudulent or politically motivated, have nothing to do with your health.

Many Christians are more concerned about enforcing those civil laws than they are God's moral law, like don't forsake the gathering together of believers as some are in the habit of doing, greet each other with a holy kiss, visit the sick, baptize people in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But over the past two years, many churches have suspended those biblical practices because of provincial statutes that aren't rooted in any way, shape, or form in any amount of authority that God has ever given to any king, ruler, prime minister, or premier. Well, how do we expect to win the bigger battles like the abortion battle if we can't even acknowledge that Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords and that the law of any nation is subject to him? So we have a job to do, don't we? It's an uphill task.

Well, what happens if a ruler violates God's law? Well, it's important to understand there's sort of two categories of laws we've already alluded to. There's divine law. Sometimes it's called natural law, meaning that when we say natural law, we don't mean it's disconnected from God, but it's evident.

It's self-evident in the natural world. For example, the sanctity of life. You don't go around killing people.

So the sanctity of life is self-evident, but it's also ultimately from God's law. It's based upon God's morals. It's inherent.

It's rooted in creation. It's often, by the way, acknowledged in charters, the great charter of England, the constitution of the United States, the charter of our own country. Unfortunately, the charter of our country is not very good because it has this demonstrably justifiable clause in it, which means, well, we can actually take them away if we want, but that's actually a violation of government authority.

Because if you have a right granted to you by God, no king, no prince, no prime minister, and no legislative assembly can ever take those from you. For example, and I hope you know this, you don't need the permission of the state to worship. No matter what the civil laws say, you don't need the permission of the state to worship.

You don't need the permission of the state to have children. This is why the policies of China, the one-child policy, are immoral. Oh, but what about overpopulation? Here's my answer to overpopulation.

Travel a little bit. The world is not overpopulated in any way, shape, or form. The problem is you get millions of people all want to live in the same acreage.

That's a problem. But if you've traveled, and I've been probably to most of the continents in the planet, there are billions of acres of unused land everywhere. We live in Canada.

Look around. So the problem is not that we have too many people. The problem is we're not stewarding it well by spreading out, packing people into small areas.

But you don't need permission from the state to have children. You don't need the permission from the state to eat your supper. You don't need permission from the state to obey the commands of God.

Work six days and rest on the seventh. Oh, do you think I could open my business now after three months of closure? Pretty please? We shouldn't have to ask that from the state. They don't have authority over our ability to work.

They don't have authority over the stewardship of our bodies or our resources. Folks, these are pre-political laws. These are creational laws laid down before anyone was ever elected to any office.

They're natural in the sense that they are creational. They include, and let me rhyme some off, a responsibility to steward your life and your resources. Genesis 1-26, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the ground.

They include the right to life because you're made in the image and likeness of God. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created them.

Male and female, he created them. So the right to life, maleness and femaleness, by the way, is a creational law, which is under attack. You look at what's going on in culture, folks, all the creational laws are under attack.

All the most fundamental and foundational laws that God laid down in the creation of the world are all being challenged. You can't find one that isn't. The right to marry and multiply, Genesis 1-28, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

This is why I ditched my Ontario marriage license five, six years ago. I refused to be an agent of the state. We will recognize marriages under God in our church.

We don't need the permission of the provincial government that will marry anybody under any circumstances to declare you married or not. But the state, strangely, in the last 75 to 80 years, has decided, it decides who can get married and under what circumstances. And you have to come to us for your document.

Historic Western nations understood this. If you go to England, you're doing genealogical research or Ireland, you don't go knocking on the city hall to find your marriage license. You go to the parish church.

They recorded it. And in the age when there wasn't Facebook to find out if someone was cheating, this is why they'd get up and they'd announce. Did anybody have a reason why this person shouldn't lawfully marry? It's like, yeah, they're actually married in the next village already.

They didn't have a central database. So they would proclaim the bans. And if anybody said, yeah, they're actually married to, this guy's married to Betty a couple villages over, then they'd say this is an illegitimate marriage.

But the point is, is that churches recognized marriages, not governments. Governments acknowledged them, but they didn't authorize them. We have the 10 commandments.

We could summarize it as follows. There's a command to worship properly. The first four, there is a command to acknowledge parental authority over children.

There's a command to acknowledge the sanctity of life. You shall not murder. By the way, there's justifiable reasons to take human life.

Whoever sheds the blood of a man by man shall his blood be shed. Genesis nine, six, it's called capital punishment. It's biblical, but you don't have the right to murder someone indiscriminately.

You have the right to property ownership. This is why we have a command that says don't steal. This is why we have a command that says don't covet another person's possessions.

That's their property. It's not yours. There's a command in there that is supposed to keep our courts honest.

Don't bear false witness. This is not about general lying. This is about perjuring yourself in court.

If you don't have honest courts, it's catastrophic. Who decides if we're allowed to steward our resources, live, marry, multiply, worship, demand respect from our children, own our own property, and expect to be treated rightly in a court of law? God. Not the state.

Not a legislative body. Not a democratic process. You can't vote these things away as much as people try.

You can't legislate these things away. They are divine laws laid down in the natural order of things and should be inherently owed and protected. Then, of course, we have civil law, statutes, case laws.

There's municipal, provincial, federal. These are laws that regulate human behavior beyond God's laws. There's nothing wrong with that.

There's nothing wrong with having laws in place about healthcare, immigration, how do I actually get in the country, or how do I denounce my citizenship, or traffic laws so people aren't getting killed every day on the roads, and property boundaries, and registration laws for how you register property. There's nothing wrong with those things. They can become a little too much at times in a heavily bureaucratic culture, but there's nothing wrong with those things in and of themselves necessarily.

We should obey them, but even they, by the way, are subject to God's laws. Let me just give you one example. Property boundaries.

If you have a property, you probably have a survey or a title. There's a steel stake here, and one here, and one here, and one here, and that defines your property. In civil law, you can't move those around.

Oh, I'd like three feet of my neighbor's property. Moving it over. Can't do that.

You can get charged. Probably do some jail time for that. If you're a land surveyor, you could tell us.

Pretty bad, but biblical law actually reflects that as well. In Proverbs, God's word is very practical. 2228, the Bible says, do not move the ancient landmark that your father have set.

Don't steal other people's land. Don't try to roll the stone over a few times. Try to get a few more feet.

It's wrong. We have civil laws that are maybe not as tightly connected to divine law, but we also have civil laws in place that are actually connected to divine principles. If civil authorities, who we vote for in our culture, put laws in place that we don't like, we have the means of meeting, and discussing, and petitioning, and protesting, or voting new people into office, and we should do that.

The problem is, even those mechanisms are starting to crumble, aren't they? Well, you can protest, but on private property. We don't want to see you on our sidewalks. We don't want to see you with this particular flag, or that flag, or limit your numbers.

This is what happens under statism. They start to control everything. But the civil authority does have authority.

For instance, taxation. They have the right to collect taxes. By the way, it costs the state money for you to exist.

You know that, right? Streets aren't built for free, so we should contribute to the taxation system. Firefighters need to get paid, so we should contribute to the taxation system. Now, the problem is, and this is where, you know, we don't want to get too much into the weeds here, but in a statist world, the state starts to take over everything, right? And we see it starting to happen even in the coming provincial elections.

Like, hey, we're going to give you some money for this, or we're going to give you some money for that. Vote for us. And people that are economically naive are like, well, why wouldn't I vote for you? You're

going to give me money.

Folks, it's a shell game. Every dollar they promised you, they're taking from your pocket. You know that, right? Basic economics.

The government has no money. It's all yours. So when they promise to pay you something, they're actually guaranteeing you that they're going to take much more from you.

A little political insight there for you. A little economic insight. But in a just world, the government has the right, within reason, to collect taxes.

I think the Roman tax rate, if I remember correctly, around the time of Christ, remember when Jesus said, rendered a Caesar that which is Caesar's, was 1% of your income. So just to put some context on it. They have the obligation to quarantine the sick.

Under Levitical law, the civil leaders can quarantine the sick. We're okay with that. You got the symptoms of a transmittable disease that's deadly? We're going to quarantine you.

You're barfing your guts up? We do not want to see you in church that week. Sorry, don't want to see you here. That's okay.

What the government doesn't have, the civil authorities don't have, is the authority to quarantine the healthy. Not only is that historically unprecedented and super weird, but it's not laid down in God's law. You don't quarantine healthy people who, while they might make us sick, they might.

So we're going to shut down an economy, stop them from worshiping and working and meeting with their loved ones, just in case. Sorry, you don't have the authority. Where in the word of God are you ever given that authority? You don't have it.

They have authority over national defense. So all of these are seen in scripture, but they don't have authority to redefine marriage. They just don't.

They don't have authority to forcibly educate your children. You know that, right? In some western nations, like Germany, you're not allowed to homeschool, or more accurately, I like to call it parental schooling, because it doesn't necessarily have to be in your home. But you don't have the authority to educate your children under your own authority.

You have to send them to a state school. If not, you can be fine. This is why many Germans have fled to Austria, because they've been banned what God has given to them.

They have this notion, well, the state can do a better job. The state doesn't have the authority to ban healthy people from worship. This is why early on in this pandemic, I'm like, yeah, we're not abiding by this.

Because it's not about a virus, it's about authority. I will make a decision with the elders of our church, if everyone's dropping dead sick, to decide what we're going to do in terms of how we're going to worship. I don't need the state doing that.

I love you more than the premier does, I can guarantee you that. And the state does not have authority to say, yeah, you can't work for the next six months. Really? No, you can't work.

You mean I can't work here? No, you can't work anywhere. What am I supposed to do? Just stay home and stay safe. You don't have that authority.

Even if it's a good idea, you don't have the authority. So this is critical for us to understand this. And if we actually believe that God is benevolent and good, then all of his statutes from one end to the other are beneficial.

And I'll add one more word, they are sufficient. We don't need to add additional, well, what ifs? What if you might be sick? What if modern epidemiology has demonstrated that you might be asymptomatic? You might be sick. Literally, we don't care.

Because you don't have the authority to ban people from the worship of God. So folks, at the end of the day, we should obey the law. But when civil law contradicts divine law, civil law must always be ignored.

Sometimes, unfortunately, in a sin-sick world, rulers are a terror to good conduct. They're supposed to be a terror to bad conduct. But some of them are a terror to good conduct.

Without God as the ultimate lawgiver, you end up with a state or another God wielding unlimited authority, unlimited powers, arbitrary court rulings, lobbyists influencing the law, and the media peddling their worldview. In the old days, the media, the reporter would come up, hey, tell me what's going on. I'm here to report the facts.

Now they're just going around reporting on their worldview, which increasingly is so obvious. It's a direct contradiction to the facts, but it fits the narrative, fits their worldview. This is where you end up when a nation says, yeah, we'll just set God aside.

And when the church says, oh, we're just going to preach this in our church because we don't want anybody to fall into works-oriented salvation. We'll just let the world go to hell in a handbasket as long as we have our Sunday morning holy huddle. This is what happens.

So we need to teach this truth, remind politicians of it, live it. And if you run for office or you are in office, you need to adopt this worldview. History has told us that failed legal systems are always legal systems tied to the denial of God's law.

How did it work out for Stalin? How did it work out for Hitler? How did it, how's, how did it work in Iraq? How's it working for Russia? When nations deny God's law, they become immoral. If there are weak laws, there's weak morals. If there's no law or no morals, none of God's law, there's no morals.

But when there's strong law under God, there's strong morals and we benefit and the world around us benefits as well.

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