

# PASTOR'S REPORT

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Which Shall We Obey?....

The C I V I L G O V E R N M E N T O R G O D ' S ?

Certain dissident voices have been raised, since January 3, deceiving God's people about obeying the government of MAN!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

DO WE UNDERSTAND that the GOVERNMENT OF GOD once ruled the entire earth?

Do we understand that Satan's major thrust is to turn us against the GOVERNMENT OF GOD? That God's government is based on THE LAW OF GOD, and the LAW OF GOD is predominant in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation?

Do we REALLY understand that THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD is at this moment being administered on the earth in ONE PLACE ONLY--in the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD? Do we realize that GOD HIMSELF raised up this era of His Church, even though He used His chosen apostle, and that it is NOT, in any way, the government of MAN?

Do we realize that the one prime point Satan uses to keep YOU out of God's Kingdom is to attack THE LAW OF GOD, which is the foundation of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD?

Do you realize that the civil governments of man, masterminded by Satan, have ALWAYS fought against the law or government of GOD?

There comes a time when you have to decide WHERE ARE YOUR LOYALTIES? One such time was January 3 and immediately following. Some very few ministers shouted out words to the effect that "WE MUST OBEY THE GOVERNMENT OF MAN, N O T THE CHURCH OF GOD!"

In the history of mankind on earth we have come down to the FINAL QUESTION: WHO IS LORD?--CAESAR, OR C H R I S T ?

YOU HAVE TO DECIDE--even as the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Scribes had to decide between Barabbas and CHRIST! There is today just ONE CHURCH ONLY, where the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is being administered--and that is in the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD!

It's time we GET THIS STRAIGHT! Satan has been using some to teach you FALSELY!

What was Jesus' teaching? What was His EXAMPLE? Some have been putting a TWIST on that and causing division in God's Church.

Take time to UNDERSTAND your position in relation to the GOVERNMENT OF MAN and also your relationship to the GOVERNMENT OF GOD!

The government of GOD did once rule the earth. This was before Adam was created! God placed a super archangel, the Cherub LUCIFER on the throne of the whole world, then inhabited by angels! How long GOD'S GOVERNMENT was administered we do not know. But this Lucifer, the highest, most powerful and mighty being God could create, next to Himself, was PERFECT in all his ways, UNTIL iniquity (LAW TRANSGRESSION) was found in him (Ezek. 28:15). Now he is SATAN the DEVIL! And he is deceiving some of God's simple and trusting people on this very matter of GOVERNMENT!

Many times recently I have mentioned that if you tune in your TV set on a movie that is two-thirds over, not knowing what went before and led up to the point you tuned in, you do not really understand what you are seeing.

So take time to get this exceedingly brief BACKGROUND. After Lucifer had become SATAN the arch-deceiver, God created the first humans--Adam and Eve. They rejected the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, and God drove them out of Eden, and barred them and all humans to be born from and after them from access to God (Gen. 3:22-24), except the VERY FEW God has specially called.

For some 6,000 years mankind has lived under GOVERNMENTS OF MAN influenced by SATAN and CUT OFF FROM GOD!

Yet, even so, man, in his personal life is commanded to BE SUBJECT TO (not always to OBEY) the government of man. It is true that the New Testament tells us that, in the regular course of each person's life, he is to be SUBJECT TO the human civil laws and governmental powers over him. The Church of God has always taught that.

But being "subject to" does not of itself mean "OBEY." When it comes to killing in war, a drafted man may be "SUBJECT TO" man's law by submitting to the PENALTY of man's law! Thus he may "BE SUBJECT TO" the law of man, while OBEYING GOD rather than man.

Now look to the example set and the teaching of Jesus. He said (Matt. 22:21) "Render unto Caesar the things that ARE Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

HUMAN GOVERNMENT has ALWAYS persecuted God and those who follow God's ways. In Jesus' day, Judea was part of the Roman Empire. Although the Roman government kept a small contingent of soldiers there, and a Roman governor or local king, they delegated all the more minor administration of Roman government to the sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees. So the Pharisees actually were the government of MAN.

When they sought to take Jesus and put Him to death, He escaped among the crowd--because His time to be crucified had not yet come. Jesus did not meekly turn the other cheek, and say, "Here I am. Take me and destroy me." You read in Matthew 12:14, "Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, HOW THEY MIGHT DESTROY HIM"!

This is precisely what happened on January 2nd, this year, 1979, in secret in the chambers of Judge Pacht in Los Angeles. It was a secret council on HOW HUMAN GOVERNMENT COULD D E S T R O Y the very Church of the living GOD!

What did Jesus do? Did He "turn the other cheek?" Did He say, "I must under all circumstances OBEY the human government of MAN"? No! The next verse says, "But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence." Another time these representatives of the government of MAN sought to take Jesus, in a crowd, to DESTROY Him, but Jesus slipped out among the crowd and escaped from them. WHY? Did not Jesus finally submit to crucifixion? Surely! But He had planned this final crucifixion with God the Father, even before the world was. He escaped from them because "His time was not yet come." He only submitted to the government of MAN when the time had come that was planned between God and the future Christ even before the world was. Until then, HE RESISTED THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT OF MAN even as HIS CHURCH has done in our day!

How did Jesus speak to their representatives of the GOVERNMENT OF MAN?

He said to them, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites..." And again, "Woe unto you, ye blind guides"... "Ye fools and BLIND."... "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees,".... "Ye blind guides," .... "Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like whited sepulchres...." "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?..." (Matt. 23).

Some would teach you that Jesus was wrong--that He should have "turned the other cheek," and submitted.

Some asked Jesus regarding obeying MAN'S law, or GOD'S law. Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to GOD the things that are GOD'S."

The headquarters buildings and property of the Worldwide Church of God are GOD'S--not Caesars! The government of the State of California was trying to TAKE OVER, and STEAL the campus and buildings that ARE GOD'S! They are dedded in GOD'S NAME! God's NAME is inlaid in prominent letters in the Auditorium which is the HOUSE OF GOD!

Mark you this, and mark it WELL! At no time did God's Church or its Pasadena brethren VIOLATE ANY LAW! Had the government of California, under the action of the Attorney General, come to arrest Mr. Rader or me, on a charge of "pilfering," and "siphoning off millions of dollars to our own use," we would have submitted voluntarily, and then, in court PROVED that the charge was FALSE! But they did not come with any warrant! We had violated no law! We DID NOT in any manner ATTACK the men representing the State of California.

WHAT ACTUALLY DID HAPPEN?

Officers from the Attorney General's office and deputies came without any definite CHARGES, swooping down without even the legally required advance NOTICE, INVADING GOD'S PROPERTY AND FACILITIES! They came on trumped-up, baseless charges, on a fishing expedition, to seize books and records, HOPING that they might find some evidence, records, or CAUSE, to bring definite charges against us! At least that is what they were SUPPOSED to be unexpectedly invading GOD'S premises for!

But they found no evidence against either Mr. Rader or myself because there is no such evidence--no such things were ever done by us!

When we remember Jesus' statement, "Render unto Caesar the things that ARE Caesar's and unto GOD the things that ARE God's"--we were 100% in OBEDIENCE! We had to protect properties BELONGING TO GOD, in order to RENDER UNTO GOD THE GREAT COMMISSION TO WHICH HE HAS CALLED US. We raised no gun, sword, or weapon of any kind against the State.

WE BROKE NO LAW!--but THE STATE DID BREAK THE LAW--and the very Constitution--the basic law of our country, violating its FIRST AMENDMENT! We are NOT "lawbreakers"--but the State of California through its Attorney General's office IS!

God said to Adam and Eve, in effect: "You have made the decision for all your posterity for the 6,000 years of the time I have allotted to MAN! You have REJECTED my GOVERNMENT. You have rejected me as the Source of basic knowledge. You have rejected me as your GOD, and chosen SATAN WHO NOW SHALL BE THE 'GOD OF THIS WORLD' (II Cor. 4:4).

"Therefore GO, and form your own governments, your own religions, create your own fund of KNOWLEDGE and devise your own way of disseminating that FASLE knowledge to your oncoming generations!"

So we have the GOVERNMENT OF MAN, swayed and formed under SATAN THE DEVIL! But remember this: In MAN'S GOVERNMENTS, formed under SATAN'S sway, even Satan knows that in HIS world, if it is to stand at all, there must be laws against breaking SOME of God's Ten Commandments, such as stealing and murder. Satan APPEARS as an "angel of light." He must APPEAR to be righteous before his deceived world!

So, MAN'S LAWS do protect the majority against evils against itself. Therefore God's teaching to us is this:

We, as GOD'S OWN PEOPLE, have come out of this world. We are not part of it. We do not vote or participate in its government in any way. We must live IN it, but we must NOT be OF it. Yet we are to stand loyally back of Christ's chosen apostle in carrying Jesus' Gospel MESSAGE of the KINGDOM (government) of GOD to the world--not to convert the world, but to be a WITNESS FOR ALL NATIONS (Matt. 24:14).

Meanwhile, though not OF this world, yet living IN it, we are to be SUBJECT, in our individual lives, to its government. Yet we are to be, first of all, SUBJECT TO CHRIST (Eph. 5:24). Where it is a matter of disobeying GOD if we obey man's government, we OBEY GOD, and if need be, suffer whatever PENALTY man's government imposes.

Should Christians ALWAYS obey MAN rather than God? Millions were put to death, honored in the Bible as the MARTYRS OF JESUS long ago. And, according to Revelation 6:9-11, there will very soon be ANOTHER mass martyrdom of God's people.

But Revelation 12:14 and 3:10 show that this Church shall ESCAPE the soon-coming martyrdom of saints and be taken to a place of SAFETY, during the coming GREAT TRIBULATION.

Let's be SURE we obey Christ FIRST!

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