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Let Earth Receive Her King!



**Does Jesus Rule Over
All the Nations?**



Robert Andrews

**Earth Receive Her King!
Does Jesus Rule Over the Nations?**

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For John Beal,
Whose passion for biblical civil government is a constant
inspiration, challenge and example for me.

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Introduction

All Christians know that Jesus is referred to as “the King of kings and the Lord of lords” in the Bible (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14, 19:16). However, we are fuzzy in our understanding of exactly how that applies to real life. What does it mean today for Jesus to be King over all other kings and Lord over all other lords? It would seem that “king” must imply some aspect of governing. Many evangelicals think that means nothing more in this life than “ruling” in our hearts over other attractions and influences. Is that true? Many Christians unconsciously think that it is.

We know intuitively that genuine faith has some effect on all aspects of our lives—our family, our vocation, our leisure time—indeed, all we do, even our politics. When we genuinely meet the Lord, all that we do is affected, maybe not immediately, but eventually.

We may have been taught that politics is a “dirty business” and really committed Christians don’t get involved in it, but in due course we realize that everything is a dirty business without Jesus. Why should He be disqualified from the governing part

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of this life on earth when He claims to already have been given “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18)? “All authority on earth” would appear to involve governing, not just in spiritual affairs—matters of the heart—but in physical matters here on earth as well.

Furthermore, when we realize politics is one of the “all things” that Paul says in Colossians 1:20 has been reconciled to Jesus by the cross, we realize that we can’t say God is not interested in our civil government and how it functions, because He is evidently interested in all things that occur in His world.

However, Christians are not sure of God’s objective for the civil governments of the nations of the world, including our own. Maybe He doesn’t have a specific objective and it does not matter to Him how our civil government is constructed. In this little book, I want to explore what the Bible says about civil government and whether or not its teaching is relevant today or if the Bible’s teaching about civil government is exclusively for the nation Israel living in an ancient time in an agrarian society. This is a topic of much controversy today in evangelical circles.

“Above us” and “beneath us”

It is important to note some very important distinctions as we begin. I believe one of Martin Luther’s greatest contributions (second only to his recovery of salvation by grace alone through faith alone) was the clear distinction he drew between our *relationship* with God and our *responsibilities* on the earth. Luther called this distinguishing between “what is above us” (our relationship with God) and “what is beneath us” (our responsibilities here on the earth). The Bible speaks at great length about both of these and the way we relate to each—by faith in our relationship with God in heaven and by obedience to fulfill our

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responsibilities in His kingdom here on the earth. It is crucial that we are able to understand the distinction.

Because of the cross, our relationship with God is forever settled; “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). He accepts us in Christ whether or not we ever obey God’s laws, whether or not we ever pray, read our Bibles or go to church, whether we become diligent disciples or remain indolent sinners. Our sanctification, as a facet of our salvation, is His job alone, not ours, and no matter how disappointed we are in ourselves, He is never discouraged, disapproving or disappointed with us.

God simply loves us, each one of us individually and specifically, with *agape* love, a love without reason, which never changes. We are free to bask in that love, never doubting the reality of it, knowing that He is always faithfully at work in our lives conforming us to the image of Christ whether or not we can see the results. That is living by faith with respect to our relationship with God—“what is above us.” Do you believe that? Believe it, because that is the gospel!

Can you see that if I really do believe this gospel in my heart of hearts, how I function in my responsibilities in this world, “what is beneath me,” will naturally and spontaneously be different than if I do not believe it?

If I really do walk by faith in this gospel of grace, a shocking thing occurs. I surprisingly discover that I am not eagerly and gleefully throwing caution to the winds by looking for opportunities to sin because God loves me anyway. As a matter of fact, I may even notice that I am becoming *more* obedient to God. I was not aware of it, but living by trying to obey the law of God only made me sin more (Romans 7:8), whereas living by faith in Him to change me releases the Holy Spirit in my life to uncon-

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sciously produce obedience to the law in me (Romans 8:4).

Trust and Obey?

The old hymn, “Trust and Obey,” does nothing to help us to understand this distinction between faith and obedience, because it pictures faith and obedience as two identical wings on an airplane, as if there were no distinction between them. However, faith and obedience are not only *not* the same, but Paul describes them as *direct opposites*—as two completely different ways to live: either by faith, trusting God to produce the results He desires in my life, or me trying to produce those results by obeying the law of God.

Ironically, while faith and obedience are opposites as a way to live, the Bible pictures them as inevitably *sequential*—obedience is always a result of faith, never the opposite. Keeping the law of God is the natural, spontaneous, unconscious result of faith.

The goal is never sin-free obedience to the law of God, but the goal is always and only just trusting Daddy, letting Him, in His own time and in His own way, determine whatever changes in my life His decretive will determines and His limitless power produces.

Sometimes, God may throw us a curve and not change us, for His own inscrutable purposes. For Paul, God’s will was not giving him victory over the besetting sin of his thorn in the flesh, but instead told him that “My grace is sufficient for you. I want you, Paul, always to remember that your treasure is not in a silver chalice, but in an earthen vessel” (2 Corinthians 12:9; 4:7). Trying to obey God consciously by the numbers is like tying apples to the branches of an apple tree and convincing oneself that the tree is bearing fruit. As a matter of fact, Paul even says that

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obedience to the law of God that is not the natural, unconscious result of faith but the result of conscious effort to obey, is sin! (Romans 14:23)

A dramatic illustration of the difference between living by the law and living by faith can be found in Victor Hugo's *Les Miserable*. Jean Valjean had lived his whole life by the law, and had failed miserably. A convicted criminal, released after serving 19 years in prison on trumped-up charges, he is bitter and angry because the law has been incredibly unfair to him. Valjean spends a night with kindly old Bishop Myriel, from whom he steals some silverware and silver plates as he is leaving the next morning.

Valjean is caught and brought back to Myriel, still unrepentant, with the silver in his possession, but Myriel tells Valjean, in the presence of the authorities, that he had forgotten to take the silver candlesticks that were also a part of the gift he had given to Valjean. Valjean goes free but Police Inspector Javert suspects that Valjean is guilty and sets out to trap him and put him back in prison.

The book relates the dramatic change in Valjean's life as a result of Myriel's unqualified forgiveness and the torment that the law produces in Javert's life as he dedicates himself to trying to get Valjean to pay for his sins, ending in his eventual suicide. Javert lived by the law and it killed him; Valjean lived by faith and it set him free to live a righteous life.

Recognizing kingdom responsibilities

Luther taught that one could not relate successfully to "what is beneath" him until he saw this gospel clearly. Until we are secure in our relationship with God, knowing that His attitude toward us does not change according to our performance, we can-

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not be free from the prison of self. We are constantly trapped in the self-absorbed doubts of, “Am I being obedient, am I maturing, am I pleasing God?” We are not free to take responsibility for what Luther called, “caring for God’s creation.”

Before that security comes, we cannot relate to others by grace but *always*, as much as we try not to do so, by the law, thus driving them away and building walls between us. This makes a love relationship impossible, because we have as yet not experienced that grace ourselves.

Some of these responsibilities we face in the world are obvious—our families, vocations, finances, church, education, etc. Only when the foundation of the *grace* of God is laid “above us,” is the *law* then free to function properly in the responsibilities that lie “beneath us.”

For example, if you neglect to train your children diligently based on the law of God in the Bible, thinking “I love them too much to discipline them. God will take care of them,” you will be right, but they will suffer the struggles that children whose rebellion was never broken must face. If you are late to work every day, thinking, “God will forgive me for my habitual tardiness because His love for me never changes,” you will be right, but you will also be fired. If you buy whatever you want with no financial planning or restraint, telling yourself “God will provide for us because He loves us,” you will be right, but you may go bankrupt in the process and live in a tent.

As we learn to walk by faith in our relationship with God, “what is above us,” and not excuse our sin as we face our responsibilities beneath us, He convicts us of our sloth, tardiness and extravagance, brings us to repentance and *produces in us, by His power*, diligence, punctuality and frugality. Ironically and counter-intuitively, this obedience-producing faith *always*

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is born and then flourishes out of facing and embracing our sin, weakness and failure rather than our strength and success.

Another responsibility in God's creation is human civil government. In the providence of God, we have been given the opportunity in America to participate, not only in choosing those who will lead us governmentally, but also the actual structure of our civil government. It was said of the sons of Issachar that they "had an understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chronicles 12:32). They were insightfully involved in the political sphere and were therefore able to help give guidance to Israel's political direction.

Does God have an opinion about what civil government we have? If so, what should it be? What standard should we use? How should we enforce those standards?

If we don't know God's plan for civil government as revealed in the Bible, we will be controlled by those who do have a plan, and it may be directly contradictory to God's plan. Evaluating this responsibility and discovering how to become like the sons of Issachar in America today is the topic of this book.

Robert Andrews
Spokane, WA
Fall, 2015

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Chapter 1

Civil Government as a Political Theocracy

There are two basic models that nations have followed over the years as their civil governments have related to religion, independent of what their political or economic structure may be. I want to look at them both in the next two chapters, and then I want to propose a model that I think combines aspects of each to give us a target at which we can aim to form a more biblical approach to civil government.

Our first option is a political theocracy. “Theocracy” is a pejorative word in America today, aligning all theocratic nations with religious crazies, such as Muslim terrorists, in the minds of a majority of our citizens. However, simply put, a theocratic government is a government that acknowledges a supreme god or religion to whom the nation, as a nation, pledges ultimate allegiance. That allegiance is spelled out in its foundational documents. What are the characteristics of a theocratic government?

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Characteristics of a theocracy

1. Culture. The culture of the nation is an outworking of the worship of its national god. A nation's culture is always its religion externalized, whether that religion is mandated formally or not. The naturally passive culture in India is the outworking of Hinduism (nirvana is the ultimate goal, the release from individual existence), the militant culture of Muslim countries is the manifestation or expression of Islam and the Koran, Latin American culture is the outworking of the mystical, magic sacramentalism of Catholicism, while the historical industry and hard work of the West is the result of the Protestantism of the Reformation.

2. Law. Without apology, the laws of a theocratic nation reflect the law code of its religion. All laws are an expression of an ultimate authority source. It has been said, "You can't legislate morality," but all laws (legislation) represent the morality of someone's religion. Law, by definition, is morality. Sharia law is the law code of Islam, and to agitate for Sharia law in America is to push to make America a Muslim theocracy.

Our laws reflect the god of our land, but we are watching them change as we change from a *de facto* (in reality, experiential, "in fact") Christian nation, based on Christian, biblical law, to one that is more consistent with the encroaching religion of secular humanism. We are not a *de jure* (legal, official) theocracy, but officially, by law, a pluralistic nation, as we will see in a later chapter. The battle rages in America between various gods of several religions for ultimate victory, with the final winner still undetermined. The victor can be recognized as the one whose laws are ultimately followed.

3. Exclusivity. In a theocracy, other religions are not given equal footing—there is no pluralism—and ultimately, other reli-

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gions are not tolerated but often even persecuted, as is true of the theocracies in the Arab world as the state religion of Islam persecutes Christians and followers of other religions.

4. Liberty of conscience. Historically, in a theocracy, religion is seen as a necessary unifying force in the nation, so participation is mandatory, not by choice. There has been no liberty of conscience in theocracies down through the ages. Augustine in the 5th century and eventually the Reformers in the 16th used Jesus' statement, "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled'" (Luke 14:23) to justify forced baptisms for all within the geographical boundaries of their theocratic nations. One's religion is not questioned because it is not a choice but a matter of the nation in which one is born.

5. Power of coercion. The power of the state is used to enforce the requirements of the religion. So, historically, in a theocratic nation, there is a union of the national religion and the power of the state. There is really no distinction. The state's power to compel is used to enforce not only the law code of the state religion but also what the state religion defines as doctrinal purity.

Historical examples

Historically, until relatively recently, this theocratic view has been the only self-conscious pattern for governing society since ancient times. In the history of mankind, every nation, tribe and ethnic group has had its own self-conscious, expressed god to whom all those born into that group have given ultimate allegiance. Leonard Verduin calls this society governed in this way a "sacral society:"

"In a sacral society there is unanimity on the reli-

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gious plane, the plane on which man's deepest loyalties lie. What Cicero said of the Rome of his day is true of all sacral societies: 'Every commonwealth has its religion and we have ours.'¹

"It follows that in a sacral society it makes no sense to speak of "church" and "state"; these institutions are as yet undifferentiated. To be sure, there may be a king and a priest, each with his own function; but the two offices may be combined in one person: the king (*rex*) may also be the priest (*sacerdos*). But whether they be one or two, the "parish" is one. They both rule over the same populace... Sacral society precludes the idea of a "non-confessing state;" its "state" has the same commitments to ultimates that is the heritage of each of its citizens. Their gods are its gods; their mysteries are its mysteries; their faith is its faith."²

When Abraham entered the promised land it was inhabited by the "Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Gergashites, and the Jebusites." These were the people groups of the land of Canaan, and they each had their own god, and as the Israelites interacted with these people to expel them from the land they all saw the battles that ensued as ultimately battles between gods. Notice that the Israelite's god is referred to in scripture as the LORD, God of Israel. So, Israel was a theocratic nation, a sacral society, as were all the nations of antiquity. Their god and their king were inseparably joined.

Later, in New Testament times, Rome also was a theocratic nation. Although other religions were tolerated, the gods of those religions were a part of a legalized, registered pantheon

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of accepted gods in Rome, who must all bow to Caesar as the supreme god. Remember the cries by the Jews at Jesus' crucifixion, "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15), a specific rejection of God as king. Christians were unwilling to do this, hence the persecutions of the first few centuries A.D.

Beginning with the Roman emperor Constantine in 312, Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, and the Christian faith was wedded to the State for the first time. Constantine became the head of the church; Rome became a "Christian nation," all its citizens became "Christians" overnight, other religions became illegal, and the unbroken, historical string of theocratic governments continued. Even the reformers, Calvin, Luther, Zwingli and Knox, continued to follow this theocratic model of civil government after the Reformation, with the state even enforcing the doctrinal beliefs of the *de jure* state religion of each particular nation (Switzerland, Germany, Scotland).

The Puritan colonists extended the tradition to our shores in 1620. In Boston, the Puritans, under Governor John Winthrop, became the most self-consciously biblical people in history. They had turned to the Bible in search of moral and political order. Their Body of Liberties (1641) served as their political charter, and that charter was biblical to the core, even citing specific Bible verses to justify its laws.³

Governor John Winthrop in 1630 had hoped that Massachusetts would serve the whole world as a city on a hill, a bright beacon of biblical Christianity that would persuade men to construct a biblical civil order in their lands. But his vision, for reasons we will investigate later, did not come to fruition.

Dissenters from sacralism

Over the years, men chaffed at being forced to follow a cer-

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tain form of religion. They had no freedom of conscience to worship the god of their choice in the manner they desired, or to not worship any god if they so chose. The state used its power of compulsion to force them into the mold of the religion of the particular nation in which they lived. They had no choice, even facing the threat of death for non-compliance in some nations of the world.

When Christians began to have the New Testament in their own language they found that the civil government is portrayed there as being concerned only with “what was beneath them,” therefore having no concerns or jurisdiction in the area of individual faith or gospel. Its concern biblically is exclusively insuring the peaceful, orderly functioning of society, ministering God’s *preserving grace* to establish and preserve society—“what is beneath us.”

At the same time, the church is described as ministering God’s *saving grace* to establish and conserve “what is above us,” our relationship with God, by preaching the gospel. There is a distinct separation of the two institutions of church and state because in the kingdom of God they have two distinct and separate responsibilities.

In order to establish and preserve society, the Bible tells us that civil government has two functions and two only:

1. Punish evil doers: “*For the civil magistrate is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil*” (Romans 13:4).

2. Protect those who do good: “*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*

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reverence” (1Timothy 2:1, 2).

Notice the civil government has no concern with matters of faith, insuring correct doctrine, education, expanding the economy, growing the job market, provision for the poor, social justice (being sure there is no discrimination) or any social issues whatsoever; only to protect us from evil and punish those who are criminals based on biblical law.

There is a clear distinction in the Bible between sin and crime. The civil government does not speak to sin that is not crime as defined in Scripture, i.e., hate, lust, anger, etc. Those are indeed sins but not biblical crimes, so the civil government has no jurisdiction. There is no such thing as a “hate crime,” biblically. A crime is a crime, based on what a man does, never on what he is thinking, and civil government only deals with crimes.

Reading the Bible and seeing clearly the separation of the two distinctly different institutions of church and state made some of the citizens of theocratic, sacral nations with the Bible available to them very restless.

Actually, long before the Reformation, there had been groups of “heretics” down through the centuries who had pursued a more biblical approach to the faith and its relation to civil government. The Paulicians in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor in the 7th-9th centuries faithfully carried the message of the true gospel during the centuries of apostasy. The Bogomils proclaimed the gospel in the Balkans amidst tremendous persecution from the Catholic Church from the middle of the 8th all the way to the 15th century when they were overrun by Islam. In northern Italy and southern France the Cathars (“Puritans”) flourished in the 12th century, as did the Waldenses at the same time and in the same region.

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These groups varied in emphasis and in theology, and sometimes their theology was less than orthodox, but they were consistent in their attempt to adhere to the Word of God in the biblical distinction of church and state (though they often differed in the interpretation of how that should happen). They also insisted on holding doggedly to salvation by grace through faith and not by the church through sacramentalism (salvation by the sacraments). God was not without a witness on the earth, even in the midst of the darkest time for an institutional church mired in sacralism.

The Anabaptists and Roger Williams

During the time of Luther and the magisterial reformers, those holding out for a distinction between church and state were all lumped into one bag by the reformers and called Anabaptists, which means “re-baptizers,” although they had many differences. However, they all saw that one did not become a Christian by being born in a Christian nation and being baptized as an infant but by faith in Jesus Christ and His death for them. They wanted to celebrate that personal experience with God by being rebaptized, hence, “Anabaptist.” They believed that the church is made up only of those who had experienced that new birth. To them, the nation was not a spiritually homogeneous society, but a composite mixture of both believers and unbelievers.

When the Reformers continued to follow the theocratic model, even though they had discovered salvation by faith alone, the Anabaptists went another way. The first mainstream dissenter in America was Puritan Roger Williams who left John Winthrop’s theocratic Massachusetts Bay Colony to found the first purely secular state in the history of mankind, Rhode Island.

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He began a whole new approach to the relationship of church and state, attempting to leave all gods out of civil government altogether.

As it turned out, it was not John Winthrop's shining city on a hill that illuminated the future of America; it was Roger Williams' beacon, a blinding light that promised autonomy from God for humanist, political man. We will look at that idea in the next chapter.

(Endnotes)

1. Cicero, *Pro Flacco* (Oxford, 1962), Vol IV, par. 28
2. Verduin, Leonard, *The Anatomy of a Hybrid* (The Christian Hymnary Publisher: Sarasota, 1998), p.11.
3. North, Gary, *Political Polytheism*, (Institute for Christian Economics: Tyler, TX, 1989), Front flap

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Chapter 2

Civil Government as Political Polytheism

The second option for the nature of civil government, other than political theocracy, is political polytheism (“poly” meaning “many”), i.e., pluralism. A religiously pluralistic government is officially religiously neutral; no religion is favored over any other religion. All religions are officially given equal standing with the government, including no religion at all. This has been the lawful (*de jure*) position of the United States since the Constitutional Convention in 1787, the first time in recorded history that that position was officially taken by a nation. Listen to this statement from Gary North’s introduction to his book, *Political Polytheism*:

“In 1787, every nation on earth was openly religious. Rulers and citizens around the world affirmed the existence of a particular god, and they called upon their god publicly to defend the nation, bless it, and bring his will to pass in history. Even in those religions that affirm no god, such as Buddhism, the peo-

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ple affirmed their faith in a particular religion. Nations were explicitly religious.

“There was only one exception to this rule in all the earth, one isolated political experiment that had affirmed the possibility—even the moral necessity—of avoiding all public references to religion in its covenantal charter. Its founder believed that no city, no state, and no nation should ever publicly affirm the existence of any particular god or religion. This was the first public experiment in secular humanism. In 1787, it had been in operation for a century and a half. That experiment was called Rhode Island.”¹

This is the model that our Founding Father’s followed in the establishment of the United States of America in Philadelphia at the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

Roger Williams and Rhode Island

Roger Williams is one of the most enigmatic characters in American history, revered by Christians with an Anabaptist background and vilified by Reformed Christians with a Puritan lineage. Born in London and raised as a Puritan, He arrived in America in 1631 as a zealous, young pastor with a reputation for brilliant scholarship. An extremely charismatic young man of 28, He was received gladly by the Puritans led by John Winthrop at Massachusetts Bay. He made his living as a teacher and briefly as a pastor in Boston, Salem and Plymouth.

However, he struggled with the Puritan religious system in New England, and within a few years of his arrival, he alarmed the Puritan oligarchy of Massachusetts by speaking out against the right of civil authorities to punish religious dissension and to confiscate Indian land.

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Williams didn't differ with the Puritans theologically—they were all staunch Calvinists. The bone that stuck in Williams' throat was the Massachusetts Bay Colony's application of theocracy—the essential union of church and state with the state involved in judging an individual's religious convictions. In October 1635, he was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony by the General Court and, with about 1,000 Massachusetts dissenters, eventually founded a new colony, Providence.² For the first time in history, a civil government was established by design as a completely secular, pluralistic entity with no gods whatsoever formally worshipped, acknowledged or even recognized. All citizens were free to believe whatever they chose. That Providence colony is our current state of Rhode Island.

Characteristics

1. Liberty of conscience. The first characteristic and the most basic one in a pluralistic state is that each citizen, legally, has complete liberty of conscience. He is free to worship publicly or privately in any way he sees fit. There is a wall of separation between his faith and the state that the state cannot breach. In the American version of pluralism, this is underscored in two places in the Constitution. First, the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights which says:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

This, undoubtedly, in the framer's minds, meant freedom

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of religion within the sphere of Christianity. They had seen the sectarianism, intolerance and persecution that was rife in England's theocracy and even in the colonies. They wanted to guard against that occurring on a national level. They probably never anticipated another religion besides some version of Christianity vying for the hearts of America's citizens. However, the established principle is the same: people are free to follow any religion or no religion, to worship as they please or not worship at all, publicly or privately, with no interference from the government.

The ensuing religious war that has arisen over the next 225 years should not be surprising. The commitment we naturally hold most dear is to our god, whoever or whatever that may be. This is the commitment that theocratic nations had used successfully for centuries to build and maintain national unity—"We all worship the same God." Pluralistic nations do not have that advantage.

Any other factor that may hold a nation together is an inferior one. Geography, language, a shared vision, even ethnicity, all fall before the attack of a people united by their religion. If he must choose, an American Muslim is a Muslim first, not an American, just as a Christian's ultimate "citizenship is in heaven." This is why moderate Muslims very rarely condemn radical ones because of the brotherhood they sense because they both worship Allah. Followers of other religions are no different, including atheists. There is a natural bond between those of the same religion.

For the first 150 years after our new national founding document was finally ratified in late 1788, the Christian religion of some sort was the public faith of the vast majority of U.S. citizens, with a smattering of atheists, agnostics and Jews. There-

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fore, Christians have convinced themselves that we are a Christian nation, and have tried to find ways to get around the obvious declaration of the nation's ultimate authority in the Constitution's preamble: "We the People, . . . do establish . . ." We were overwhelmingly a *de facto* Christian nation, although not a *de jure* one. There is no specific mention of God or Jesus Christ anywhere in the document, except in the perfunctory "year of our Lord," an exceedingly strange omission if the intent of the framers was to found an explicitly Christian nation.

As time has gone by, the religious fervor of our country has waned; the fire of the revivals of the two Great Awakenings in the 1740's and the 1820's, the Azusa Street Pentecostal awakening of the 1900's and the charismatic renewal of the 1960's have all been reduced to burning embers. The resultant vacuum has been filled in America by other gods.

Obviously, minority religions and those advocating no religion, being historically outnumbered, have moved against the declining Christian majority in America based on their most dearly-held commitment. They have used whatever means possible to lessen their numerical disadvantage. The courts, themselves increasingly non-Christian, have complied. In an attempt to quash the Christian majority, and in violation of the First Amendment, America's government today has driven Christianity totally out of the public square. They have used the fallacious claim that any public expression of Christianity is an attempt by the government to establish religion. So, the battle rages, a battle that is always unavoidable in a pluralistic nation.

2. The "no religious test" clause. The second characteristic of our pluralistic Federal Government is illustrated in Article 6, Section 3 of the Constitution, which states:

"The Senators and Representatives before men-

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tioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.”

This section in the Constitution is even more significant than the Preamble. The final phrase in this section guarantees that the United States is not, nor has it ever been, nor will it ever be, an explicitly constitutional theocracy. It is illegal to demand that any United States elected official, either on the national or state level, be or not be, a follower of a particular religion. Under this constitution it will remain a religiously pluralistic nation.

This was a matter of great concern to some as the Constitution was being ratified, particularly Patrick Henry, a leader of the Anti-Federalists. He refused to go to Philadelphia as a delegate to the Convention, along with Richard Henry Lee, also from Virginia, and John Hancock and Sam Adams from Massachusetts. As Henry said, “I smell a rat in Philadelphia.”

Their concern, along with this “no religious test” phrase, was that the commission by the states given to the delegates to the Convention was only to amend the Articles of the Confederation, not to compose a whole new document to found a brand new nation. In the minds of the Anti-Federalists, the delegate’s whole body of work was completely illegal. The secrecy in which all the proceedings were carried out, with no records of the proceedings released until the last delegate died, led to the feeling that something was not right. The battle for ratification was fierce and only passed after much controversy.

Civil Government as Political Polytheism

The government can be composed of magistrates that could conceivably be from any religion or no religion at all. They supposedly rule in an impartial manner, based on the law of the land. However, this is a practical impossibility. We do not lay aside our most cherished convictions by putting on a judge's robe or assuming an elected position. We carry those convictions with us, along with the presuppositions that accompany them, either consciously or unconsciously. If a convinced, ardent Muslim is elected to the city council in Dearborne, Michigan, where a growing, aggressive, Muslim population is increasingly more influential, his affinity for Shari law will influence the decisions he makes, just as the Bible would influence how a Christian would rule.

3. "Strength through diversity." The strength of a polytheistic nation initially is the belief that pluralism is a "grand design" by which the country can be a melting-pot of diversity, everyone living together in harmony. I have heard it said that America is the only nation in the world without a common ethnic background but is held together by a common vision of liberty.

That is an extremely dubious assumption. Until relatively recently we did have a common Christian heritage with a prevailing European background. It is highly doubtful that this vision of liberty by itself is strong enough to overcome increasing ethnic and religious diversity. Individual liberty is a distinctly Christian concept.

Historical Examples

Of the 198 governments of the world listed in Wikipedia, 151 are republics of one kind or another, with no designation as either a theocratic republic or a pluralistic republic. The most obvious example of pluralism over theocracy for us to under-

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stand, of course, is the United States of America.

We had two choices in 1787 at the Constitutional Convention. The Massachusetts Bay Colony model, led by John Winthrop in its early years, represents the theocratic model, and Rhode Island, founded by Roger Williams, the pluralistic model. At the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia the Rhode Island model carried the day, and the Great American Experiment in pluralistic government was born.

We have examined some of the problems that have arisen over the pluralistic nature of the American system. They all spring from one basic spiritual truth: *There can be no religious neutrality in government.* Jesus said that we are either for him or against him (Matthew 12:30), and that is true of nations as well as individuals.

Every nation has a god today just as did all of the nation-states that made up Canaan as Abraham entered it 4000 years ago. We are created to worship God, and worship we will, either the true God or some other god we have erected. We can do no other. The question is only which god we, as a nation, will choose to worship. In every country of the world, there will always be a battle for supremacy between the God of the Bible and the god of all other religions, Satan, until one side eventually triumphs.

So, the pluralists are fooling themselves if they think our nation is religiously neutral. Who is our official God? The first line of the Constitution lays out our God clearly:

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do or-

Civil Government as Political Polytheism

dain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

The framers appealed to man himself (“We the people”), corporate man, as our nation’s final authority. Satan’s temptation, directed at Adam and Eve in the Garden, was repeated in 1787 at Philadelphia: “You will be as God, knowing good and evil.” Remember, a nation’s god is the one whose laws are followed. We now make our own laws, with no consideration of God’s law in the Bible whatsoever, proudly determining for ourselves what is right and wrong, so we are our own gods. Humanism became our *de jure* national religion in 1787. Now, 225 years later, it has finally become our *de facto* national religion as well.

All governments, be they monarchies, oligarchies, democracies or republics, are battlefields between competing gods—between the two great antagonists, the God of Christianity and the god of all other religions, Satan himself—whose conflict on the earth constitutes human history. Civil Government will be with us as long as sin remains, until Jesus comes. However, He has given us, as His people, the task of progressively taking back this piece of real estate called earth from Satan, who was definitively defeated at the cross by Jesus.

One of the institutions God has ordained for the job is the civil government. Recognizing what we have learned about theocracy and pluralism, can we put together a model from these two options, based on the Bible, for a civil government that works toward that end? In the next chapter, we will look at the commission we have from God to do that very thing. Finally, I want to propose a practical, workable model for a biblical civil government.³

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(Endnotes)

1 North, Gary, *Political Polytheism*, front flap.

2 Barry, John M. *God, Government and Roger Williams' Big Idea*, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/God-Government-and-Roger-Williams-Big-Idea.html?c=y&page=2>

3. It can be seen from the previous paragraphs that God and Satan are at war over who will rule over the earth, and there can be no neutrality. Jesus will ultimately win this war, but, in the providence of God, according to His inscrutable will, there are temporary setbacks, as other gods exert their claim.

The United States appears to be one of those setbacks. We have gone from the experienced and acknowledged rule of Jesus Christ in the majority of colonial documents, to a now-apparent pluralist nation. However, the United States today is, in actuality, still a theocracy, with humanism, as the new god whose laws we unanimously and enthusiastically follow. We now, not only officially in the Constitution but in reality, submit to humanism as our god, corporate man himself. Pluralism was a 200 year transition from one God to another as king.

Religious pluralism is presented in this book as a viable option which a nation may choose, but inevitably it is but a transition phase through which some nations pass on their way to a theocracy.

Chapter 3

How Does King Jesus Rule on the Earth?

After seeing the weaknesses of both of our models for civil government as they have been implemented in history, it can be difficult for the interested, committed Christian to know what to think. Is there a biblical, workable model for civil government? Is this something God wants us to be interested in, much less be involved in trying to implement?

During the Civil War, there was a groundswell of support for amending the Constitution to make it a specifically Christian document. Among Christians, there was recognition of our omission of any mention of Jesus Christ and his Lordship in the Constitution, and, because of the war, awareness that as a nation we desperately needed Him. The National Reform Association was founded in 1863 for the purpose of getting this idea of including Jesus and His rule over our land before the nation and eventually bringing about a change in the Constitution. They had an audience with President Lincoln who expressed mild support. Here is his response to the meeting:

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“The general aspect of your movement I cordially approve. In regard to particulars I must ask time to deliberate, as the work of amending the Constitution should not be done hastily. I will carefully examine your paper in order more fully to comprehend its contents than is possible from merely hearing it read, and will take such action upon it as my responsibility to our Maker and our country demands.”¹

Periodically during the last half of the 19th century, the NRA continued to work on the project, with substantial support in Congress, keeping the bill to change the Preamble to acknowledge the rule of Jesus Christ regularly before the Senate judiciary committee, but never achieving a vote on the Senate floor.²

So, acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus Christ over our land is not a new, novel and unreasonable idea but one that has been considered seriously in our nation’s history. But is there a biblical rationale for recognizing politically the rule of Jesus over the nation? There is, and it is a surprising one to many evangelicals.

One of the most overlooked events in the life of Jesus Christ is also one of the most important. We celebrate Jesus’ birth, death and resurrection, even having holidays for each, but the evangelical church, for the most part, practically ignores this momentous event. No holiday memorializes it, generally no sermons are preached to observe it, and we have not been taught to recognize its enormous implications. I am referring to the ascension of Jesus Christ and His session at His Father’s right hand.

How Does King Jesus Rule on the Earth?

The ascension as seen on the earth

Luke tells us in Acts 1 that Jesus appeared to the disciples for forty days after His resurrection, speaking to them “of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3).

Then He was taken up to heaven in a cloud and the disciples were told by two angels that He “will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

Here we have the very familiar picture of what happened at the ascension—Jesus leaving the earth as the disciples observed it. In order to understand the tremendous importance of the ascension and its implications in our study of civil government, we must look at it from another perspective. Where did Jesus go when He ascended, and what happened when He got there? Was He just leaving the earth (sort of an “exit stage left”—a way to “get out of Dodge,” so to speak)? That’s all most of us have ever heard about the story.

The ascension as seen in heaven

We know generally that He “ascended into heaven,” but in order to comprehend the significance of this event, we must be more specific. In Daniel 7, the Bible gives us a dramatic prophetic look at the other end of the ascension. This was Jesus’ return to heaven for the first time since the incarnation. What events accompanied that arrival? Here is Daniel’s vision in verse 13:

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.”

Because of the phrase “coming with the clouds of heaven,” many have equated this with the second coming of Jesus Christ, because the angels said in Acts 1 that Jesus would return in the

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same manner that He had left—on a cloud.

However, this cannot be the second coming, because Jesus “came to the Ancient of Days,” who, we can see in verses 9 and 10 in Daniel 7, is God the Father—the sovereign God of history—seated in the throne-room in heaven. No, Jesus is *coming up* in this passage, not *coming down*! Daniel is not prophesying Jesus’ return to earth in 7:13, but is giving us a prophetic look at what would indeed occur at the other end of the ascension. He is giving us a picture of Jesus’ return to His heavenly home that He left thirty-three years earlier when He took upon Himself human flesh at the incarnation.

I can imagine the scene of rejoicing and jubilation as the myriad of angels welcomed Him back! They then brought Him into the Father’s presence where Jesus snapped off a salute, so to speak, and reported on the task He had been given to do; “Father, mission accomplished!” What had He accomplished?

Jesus’ successful three-fold mission at the cross

First, we are very familiar with what Jesus did toward God at the cross. By His death, He paid the penalty for our sin, and God has been legally propitiated, or completely satisfied. We are justified before Him.

Secondly, because God put those He would save “in Christ,” when Jesus died, we died with Him. We have been crucified as well, that we should no longer be slaves to sin, and raised with Christ to newness of life. This is the significance of His death and resurrection toward man.

But a third aspect of His death that we seldom hear anything about is the significance of His death toward Satan, which has a direct bearing on our scene in the throne-room in Daniel 7 and our view of civil government.

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What Satan had stolen from Adam in Eden, he lost at the cross—the right to rule over the earth. By Jesus’ death, God tricked Satan into killing an innocent man, one over whom he had no authority, because Jesus was not a sinner. Born of a virgin, He was not a “son of Adam.”

In 1 Corinthians 2:8, in essence, Paul says that Satan overplayed his hand by murdering Jesus. By so doing he fell into the trap that God, in His divine wisdom, had set for him “before the ages”—sort of a divine sting operation. Satan and his representatives, the “rulers of this age,” did not understand the wisdom of God, or “they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” Now, as a legal murderer for the first time, killing a Man over whom he had no authority, Satan was condemned to die according to God’s legal system. As a condemned criminal in the divine court of cosmic justice, he was “stripped” of his authority (that is the meaning of the Greek word “disarmed” in Colossians 2:15). God lawfully took back the kingdom Satan had taken from Adam, his right to rule on the earth. He was no longer legally “the god of this world.”

Daniel describes the effect of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the rulers of the “kingdoms of the world. These rulers, Satan’s hierarchical representatives, were “stripped” of Satan’s authority. Their dominion was taken from them:

“I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.

“As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time” (Daniel 7:11, 12).

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The coronation of the new “god of this world”

So, the Ancient of Days is seated in His throne-room as the sovereign God of history (Daniel 7:9, 10), having legally recovered from Satan the right to rule over creation. After centuries of holding mankind in tyranny, darkness, misery and the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15), Satan had been stripped of his authority and is now bound in chains himself (Revelation 20:1, 2), his activities severely limited. Who will now rule? Who will be the new “god of this world?”

The coronation scene that followed Jesus’ arrival in heaven is pictured for us in Daniel 7:14:

“Then to Him (Jesus) was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one shall not be destroyed.”

In the words of Peter on the Day of Pentecost, *“This Jesus God has raised up... being exalted to the right hand of God.... God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”* (Acts 2:32, 33, 36).

Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 are descriptions of this same event that would occur at Jesus’ coronation at His ascension. He was, at that time, given the kingdom. For the first time, He was crowned as King of all kings and Lord of all lords. All authority was indeed then given to Him, and He now rules over both heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18)!

This is one of the most attested to events in the Bible. There are innumerable references or allusions to Jesus’ exaltation to the Father’s right hand in both Old and New Testament, all referring to this event prophesied in Daniel 7:14 and in Psalm 2

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and Psalm 110.

Delegation of the kingdom

Everyone agrees that Jesus rules as King of kings and Lord of lords from God's right hand. We have to believe that because the Bible clearly teaches it. But what does it mean? Practically, it often means very little. He is in some way vaguely "ruling" and He is in some way vaguely our "Lord," and we generally try to do what a "good person" would do, but other than that those terms have little meaning.

However, the kingdom of God, this rule of Jesus Christ, is a lot more specific than that. Daniel 7: 27:

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

After Jesus had been prophetically given the kingdom here in Daniel 7, a kingdom that would last forever and that would never be destroyed, it was then permanently delegated to the "saints of the Most High!" Jesus has delegated His "right to rule," His kingdom authority that he won from Satan at the cross, to His body, made up of those in His church, to rule for Him as His representatives today on the earth.

The implications of this are staggering. As we recognize the areas where Jesus has delegated responsibility to His people, we are to rule over them with His authority, by His law as revealed in the Bible, recognizing that we will ultimately be accountable to Him for how we have ruled. We cannot escape the implications of "rule;" all of us are either under authority or exercising it, if we indeed are a part of His kingdom. The very word "king-

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dom” implies rule.

For our discussions in this book we are concerned with rule in the civil government. In other places I have explored at great length what that rule means in the family and the church, God’s two other established institutions through which He rules on the earth.³

Each institution is accountable directly to God for the responsibilities it has been given in the sphere where it has been given authority, with clear parameters around that authority. The civil government does not have the responsibility to preach the gospel; that is the church’s job. The church does not punish criminals; that is the state’s job. The church and the government do not care for and raise children; that is the family’s job. This is called sphere sovereignty; each institution is sovereign before God in its assigned duties and they do not encroach upon one another.

At any rate, all rule and authority on the earth proceed from Jesus, currently seated at His Father’s right hand in heaven and ruling by His authority, according to His law as revealed in the Bible, delegated to His people on the earth, including in the civil sphere.

With this as a theological basis for Jesus ruling in the governments of nations, can we devise a model for civil government that will be true to the law of God as revealed in the Bible?

(Endnotes)

1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_amendment

2 <http://candst.tripod.com/nra.htm>,

3 Robert Andrews, *The Family, God’s Weapon for Victory* (Rice, WA: Sentinel Press, 2010); *A Glorious Church, Attacking the Gates of Hell* (Rice, WA: Sentinel Press, 2011)

Chapter 4

The Foundation of a Biblical Civil Government

We have seen that historical political theocracy and religious pluralism each have a fatal flaw that has often rendered both to be less than effective representations of the kingdom of God in the political sphere. Each denies a spiritual truth that is inviolate and that man cannot change, no matter how much he desires to do so.

The flaw in historical theocracy.

The fatal flaw in historical theocracy has been a denial of liberty of conscience—the freedom to openly believe what is in one’s heart to believe. Theocratic nations have attempted to force their citizens to believe in the national faith, when, in fact, true faith cannot be demanded. A man cannot believe when he does not believe. He is a prisoner of his faith. He does not decide what he believes. Faith is a gift from God, and He either gives or withholds that faith, according to His sovereign will.

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you

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that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain” (John 15:16).

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

Any theocracy that coerces its citizens to be believers, or assumes that all in a certain geographical area are believers, is a flawed expression of the kingdom of God. If a man is forced to claim a religious conviction he does not genuinely hold, the civil government that forces him to do so will eventually collapse.

However, our God is an amazing God, and He specializes in using flawed vessels, both individually and nationally, to do His work. At the cross, God began the process of restoring His world that had been under the control of Satan since the Fall, and He used the instrument of Christendom, a collection of flawed historical theocracies, to do so.

Restoration was definitely in order. For centuries Satan had held mankind in the bondage of tyranny, darkness, fear and misery that were a way of life in the pagan world. We tend to venerate and romanticize the Greco-Roman culture because of its brilliant scholars, philosophers, writers and political theorists, but during that time sin, debauchery and degradation were prevalent everywhere, and human life was practically worthless.

In the Classical world, so admired and revered by academia, women were treated as nothing more than property. A father had literal life and death power over his wife and children, and a common practice was to leave unwanted children outside in the elements to die.

Slavery was taken for granted, and defended vigorously as the natural, normal and preferred state of affairs by Aristo-

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tle. Many of the great, revered Greek philosophers were pedophiles.

Routine brutality made the classical world seem unbelievably callous to us, but it was just the way things were to them. They thought nothing of ordinary people in Rome going to the Coliseum, like we go to a football game, to watch ravenous lions eat screaming people, or to watch gladiators literally bash each other's brains out. Nobody even considered this to be brutal. It was normal in the Classical world over which Satan ruled.

But that all changed definitively at the cross. Satan was legally stripped of the authority he had stolen from Adam, and for the next three centuries, the early church was the launching pad for the spread of God's reclamation project.

Then, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the high Middle Ages, commonly called the "Dark Ages," Christianity was actually, quietly, gradually spreading over Europe through the imperfect theocracies of Christendom. During that time, most of the everyday barbarisms of the Classical world were quietly mitigated or eliminated altogether. Abortion, infanticide, slavery, pederasty, divorce, crucifixion (once a common punishment for petty crimes), all disappeared within the boundaries of Christendom.

However, the weaknesses enumerated in Chapter 2, particularly no liberty of conscience, were always present, with God continuing to move in His church despite its ever-present sin.

The flaw in pluralism.

Just as the fatal flaw in a theocracy is a lack of liberty of conscience for the individual, the fatal flaw in pluralism is the assumption that there can be religious neutrality in civil government. That is an impossibility.

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Jesus said “*He who is not with Me is against me*” (Matthew 12:30). Neither man, nor the institutions he has established, which are simply a corporate expression of man, can be neutral. Man has been created to worship and worship he will. He may worship a formal, false religion, an idol he has erected, or even man himself. His god is what demands his supreme and final loyalty. It is the authority to whom he looks and the god whose law he has chosen to obey.

A *de jure* (by law) pluralistic society will never be a *de facto* (in fact) pluralistic society; it cannot be, because a composite society demands a composite law system, which is impossible. When controversy comes, as it always will, the law system of the state’s *de facto* religion will ultimately be followed.

Some would say “natural law can be followed,” a sense that all religions have the same basic, recognizable understanding of right and wrong, but our current situation in America contradicts that belief.

Even if competing religious systems have some degree of basic agreement, i.e., it is wrong to kill someone, to steal, etc., once we are past a few foundational similarities, competing law systems have little in common. There is great discrepancy among the three primary, competing religions in our country—Christianity, Islam and Secular Humanism—as to what the law should be and how it should be enforced. Look at any controversial issue in our day—homosexual marriage, gun control, welfare, education, foreign policy, family authority relationships etc.—and there is a broad, often antagonistic, difference of opinion. We are finding it impossible to reach a consensus now that we are no longer a *de facto* Christian nation. The laws of other religions are fighting with Christianity for supremacy in our country.

Pluralism has no solution. Competition inevitably will con-

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tinue until one of the religions wins the war and forces its law system on the rest of the population. When that happens, the country may remain a *de jure* pluralistic one, but it will eventually become a *de facto* theocracy. The winner has been decided. A theocracy where some god is worshipped is inevitable.

We are now ready to propose a biblical foundation for a government that honors Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords, reigning from God's right hand over the nations of the world, including the United States of America.

Biblical examples of political reform

There are two examples of reform in the Bible that illustrate two directions we may go as Christians while we contemplate our political future. The first is the rule of Jeru in the divided kingdom of Israel in 2 Kings 9, 10.

Jeru was the 10th king of the Northern kingdom of Israel and the only one of 19 who is not recorded as an evil king. He tore down the temples of Baal that Ahab and Jezebel had erected and rid Israel of Baal worship completely. However, he did not replace it with the worship of Jehovah based on God's law.

“And the LORD said to Jehu, ‘Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.’

“But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin” (2 Kings 10:30, 31).

Jehu tore down Ahab's idols, but allowed Jeroboam's golden calf worship to remain. He substituted one idol for another. His reform was incomplete, inadequate and therefore ineffective.

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After Jeru, the string of evil kings continued unbroken.

Why? Verse 31 tells us: *“But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart.”* He did not replace a false view of the state’s relationship with religion with the truth of the law of God. He simply changed idols.

This is the view of the conservative movement today. It wants to replace liberal, secular humanism with conservative, religious humanism. Both see man and what he determines to be “the law” as foundational and authoritative. Christians are deceived because conservative, man-made laws coincide more frequently with God’s law than liberal, man-made laws, but they are both what man himself determines they should be. Therefore, they shift based on who is making them. God’s law is eternal and inviolate no matter who is in office.

The second example of political reform is Josiah in 2 Kings 22, 23. Josiah became king of Judah after two of the most evil kings in the histories of Israel or Judah, Manasseh and Amon. During the 55 year reign of these two kings, the temple had fallen into disrepair and the nation was given completely to idol worship, worship of the sun, moon and stars in the temple courtyard itself, altars to Baal and Ashterah were erected and child sacrifice to Molech was practiced.

Josiah was crowned king at eight years old and the Bible says that at 15, he, somehow, in the providence of God, began to “seek after the God of David” (2 Chronicles 34:3). At 20, Josiah traveled over all Judah for 5 years, tearing down temples to false gods that had been in place for 75 years, abolishing idol worship that had been practiced for decades and eliminating all the priests that had led it.

When Josiah was 25, with the nation cleansed of its idols, he set about to restore the temple that had not been repaired in

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100 years and had fallen into great disrepair. He stumbled upon a copy of a very old and important looking book that proved to be the Law of Moses that no one currently alive had ever heard of.

As Josiah read it, he realized that Judah had long been living in sin and that God must be furious with the nation. An old prophetess verified that the nation was doomed, but because of his repentance and restoration of the nation, Josiah would not see its final destruction.

Josiah read the law of God to Judah and called them to national repentance and they responded and covenanted with God, after 75 years of rebellion, to again order the nation by His law.

The revival lasted 14 years until the final judgment of God on Judah began. First, the Egyptians conquered the country, with Josiah dying in battle as he fought against them, and then Babylon captured Judah and carried the majority of the people away into captivity, and the nation was no more, although a remnant did return to the land after 70 years. After Josiah's reign, four evil kings lasted 22 years before God turned out the lights on Judah.

Josiah's reform in Judah was different than Jehu's in Israel. Josiah replaced idol worship with the law of God whereas Jehu tore down a majority of the idols but had nothing with which to replace them—and you can't replace something with nothing.

Secular conservatives are simply attempting to replace man's law with which they do not agree, with man's law with which they do agree. The kingdom of God does not function based on man's law, but only the law of the King of kings.

Our solution today lies in a clear understanding of the biblical separation of church and state as two separate institutions

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with two separate tasks. The church is to spread the gospel—the full-on, nothing-left-to-do, grace of God in our relationship with Him who is above us. The government is to punish evil and protect the righteous in society beneath us, according to the not-one-jot-or-tittle-will-pass-away law of God, with Jesus as Lord over all. That is the answer to the Lord’s prayer—“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on the earth as it is in heaven.”

Foundational document

Bringing our nation into that kingdom definitively begins with a foundational document, a constitution, upon which all the nation’s laws are based, that proclaims that fact.

Following is a sample Federal Constitution Preamble that states the necessary truths. Each of the state constitutions would begin with the same general statement, applied to the state instead of the nation.

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, hereby acknowledge that Jesus Christ rules over this nation as our legitimate sovereign Lord and King from His place of authority at God’s right hand. We recognize that He and His law in the Bible are the source of all justice, domestic tranquility, general welfare and liberty for ourselves and our posterity. We ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

The initial reaction to such a Preamble is shock, because we have been conditioned to believe that pluralism is the only legitimate civil government. We have been taught that the Constitution is almost on a par with the Bible and to question that, is to question one of our most cherished presuppositions.

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This book is in no way designed to impugn the motives of our founding fathers who wrote the Constitution. Many say that the omission from the Constitution of the Lordship of Jesus Christ was an oversight, or that it was a fact that everyone took for granted, or that the founders were leaving that religious definition to the states, and that all may well be true. I do not pretend to know the motives of the founders. It is true that the Declaration of Independence, written 11 years previously, states clearly that God is the source of our liberty, not government. However, not to state firmly again, in our founding document, the source of our inherent freedom that this government is instituted to protect, is at best a gross oversight.

We have seen that the pluralism of the Constitution is impossible, and that we, as a nation, must ultimately choose a god. We have also seen that, without question, the one true God is Jesus Christ who is currently ruling over heaven and earth from God's right hand. That is not just theoretical or philosophical, but actual.

The next reaction, after the initial shock, is practicality. "This can't work. No one will agree to this, even Christians. It is too radical." You are absolutely right. Few would agree to this now, even Christians. But that is because we have been conformed to the world's way of thinking about civil government and we have not been trained to think biblically.

The question should be "What does God want in the jurisdictional sphere of civil government?", not, "What will work?" We have seen that the government must be one that recognizes that Jesus already rules from His Father's right hand.

Because of our education and our long-held assumptions about the superiority of pluralism as a political system, the historical harshness, bigotry and intolerance of theocracies and

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our veneration for the framers of the Constitution, it is hard for us to get past our presuppositions. As Paul says in Ephesians 1:18, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be opened.”

God Himself must open our eyes to the truths of Scripture in the area of civil government. When God does this, we will be motivated to work to see the Lord’s prayer answered—“*Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*” (Matthew 6:10). What happened in fact at the ascension, the enthronement of Jesus as King of kings, will then be true in experience here on the earth.

We are now in the process, in the church, of being disciplined out of the world’s way of thinking in every area of life, including the political arena. We won’t get there today, or tomorrow or probably in our lifetimes, but we must have a vision of truth to see it accomplished. We can continue to learn with the Bible as our textbook, illumined by the Holy Spirit, as to God’s plan for civil government.

Chapter 5

A Constitution for a Christian America

Having laid the foundation theologically and philosophically for a constitutionally established Christian nation, I want now to give a few distinctions that I believe are the natural, biblical superstructure that will naturally follow when the proper, national foundation has been laid. These are all based on biblical precepts. However, I am not going to anchor every one of these points on a Bible verse in this brief book. This book is a broad brush-stroke, designed to give the Christian community a vision for a “radical,” biblical concept of a distinct, confessional, covenantal, Christian nation. I have listed several books in the Bibliography that will provide copious detail for the interested student.

For the most part, the current Constitution is a wonderful document, the greatest national constitution in history, with many of its ideas and structure based on the Bible. The framers, with their Puritan heritage, recognized the inherent sinfulness of man and his need to be restrained, witness Thomas Jefferson’s famous quote, “Let no more be said about the confidence

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of men, but bind them down from mischief with the chains of the Constitution.” Another indication of its biblical heritage is the separation of powers that is implied in Isaiah 33:22: “*For the LORD is our Judge, The LORD is our Lawgiver, The LORD is our King; He will save us.*”

In this verse the judicial, legislative and executive branches are indicated, as Jesus delegates His authority to these three branches of government from the right hand of God. Over the last few years we have ignored this safeguard, instituted to restrain man’s inherent self-seeking, and we are suffering the consequences.

As we attempt to use the Bible as our foundation and legal authority, there are other adjustments to the Constitution that will be made along with those already proscribed. These are only suggestions, a starting point for discussion. Once the permanent authority, the Word of God, is established, the application of that word in both federal and state constitutions is determined by elected men of God seeking to solve the problems of the nation with biblical solutions.

Let’s look at some of the issues that will be different from our current Constitution.

Citizenship

Who is a citizen in the Christian nation that is the United States? Currently, all those who are born on American soil or who are born to at least one American citizen are natural born citizens of the United States. Citizenship is based on location of birth or citizenship of parents.

In the biblical pattern, expressed by the nation Israel, citizenship was based on one’s covenantal relationship with Jehovah God. The covenant was a national covenant based on 1)

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one's ethnicity (Jewish), and 2) circumcision as the sign of being a member of the covenant people.

Under the New Covenant, the covenant people of God are no longer an ethnic people group, the Jews, but now come from every nation, tribe and tongue. Membership in God's covenant people is not by birth or circumcision but by faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and His death on the cross for our sins.

There were those who lived in Israel, even born in Israel, called "strangers," or "sojourners," who were not members of the national covenant. They were not "citizens" with full national privileges, but they could work, own businesses, participate in national life and enjoy all the blessings of living in a nation that had Jehovah as its God. They were honored, accepted and not discriminated against in any way.

However, they could not hold leadership positions and help to determine national policy. If, after a period of time, they determined that the God of Israel was the God they would like to make their God, they could convert to Judaism as a proselyte, become circumcised and be a fully participating member of the covenant people.

Throughout the history of Israel, proselytes played a prominent role. Rahab and Ruth, both non-Jews are in the lineage of Jesus. Under the kings, strangers rose to influential positions (Doeg the Edomite (1 Samuel 21:7), Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11:3). After the return from Babylon many "had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God" with their families (Nehemiah 10:28), and in Esther's time "many of the people of the land became Jews, for the fear of the Jews fell upon them" (Esther 8:17).

So, historically, God's people do not represent a "closed shop," only for a select few from a favored nation, race or ethnic

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group, but membership in God's covenant people is open to all whose "God is the LORD."

With this biblical perspective, here is a modern-day application of this principle, attempting to follow scriptural principles as closely as possible.

1. A citizen of the United States is a professed, Trinitarian, baptized Christian, who is a member in good standing of a Trinitarian church with a functioning church government that holds to the Apostle's Creed

This is not the establishment of a particular denomination or theology, but the establishment of a state Trinitarian Christian church, recognized by the state as an official state church. The individual churches can be denominational or independent as long the church has an accountable membership, is Trinitarian and subscribes to the Apostle's creed, i.e., is an historically orthodox Christian church. The civil government has no say as to the church's theology or doctrine, but the church can be a part of the national church if it meets the above criteria, the basic qualifications since the early church councils for being a "Christian" church. This makes their members who are over 21 and in good standing eligible to be citizens of the United States.

Some would question the necessity of belonging to a church rather than simply claiming to be a Christian. However, a willingness to submit to church authority and have the fruit of one's faith publicly recognized and evaluated is a good (although not perfect) indication that one's faith is genuine.

This church membership is a prerequisite for citizenship and, obviously, for holding public office.

2. This means that there is no citizenship based on birth. When a child reaches 21, if he is a Christian he can make a pro-

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fession of faith, join a Trinitarian state church and become a citizen or remain a sojourner, experiencing all the privileges of citizenship except voting and running for public office. Only adult citizens can vote and run for office.

3. Amend article 6 section 3 of the Constitution which says:

“The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.”

The italicized text shall be amended to read:

“All office holders must be United States citizens who have subscribed to a Trinitarian oath and be a member in good standing of the national church in order to hold any office or public trust under the United States.”

4. Amend Amendment 1 of the Constitution which says:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

The italicized text shall be amended to read:

“Congress shall make no law restricting the establishment of the Trinitarian Christian religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; the establishment of all other religions is prohibited.”

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The law of the land

1. All laws passed by Congress or the State Legislatures must explicitly or implicitly reflect biblical truth. The Bible is recognized as our ultimate standard, and this fact is included in the written Constitution.

2. Congress will propose only laws that conform to biblical truth and the Constitution. Conformity to Scripture, various interpretations of the Bible and its application to current law will then be debated and voted upon by members of Congress and the State Legislatures.

3. The civil government is only concerned with actions based on the scriptural definition of crime, neither on sin that is not a crime, nor upon religious belief, thus preserving liberty of conscience. Blasphemy, the public renouncing of the God of the Bible or the advocacy of another god, is a biblical crime, not because of an internal belief system that is heretical, but because it is treason—the public promotion of another king, i.e., the advocacy of the overthrow of the government. The biblical punishment ranged from execution to expulsion from the country. This does not mean that an atheist or a follower of another religion cannot live in the United States, but he must worship his own god privately and peacefully, not advocating the overthrow of the government of King Jesus to others.

4. All borders are completely open. All of the people of the nations of the world are welcome to come to the United States to “taste and see that the Lord is good.” All who are willing to abide by the laws of the land are free to enjoy the opportunities of a Christian nation, but there is no welfare, no free services, no government assistance, etc. Civil government is restricted to its biblical parameters, i.e., punishing evil and protecting the righteous.

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5. All strangers have the opportunity to be evangelized, be saved, join a church, be completely assimilated into the country and become full-fledged voting, office-holding citizens. They are honored and given special care. Because English is our national heritage, English is the exclusive, official language of all business and social intercourse.

Taxes

1. Taxes are only to support the legal function of protection (National Defense, police, National Guard, fire department, etc.) and punishment of crime. There is no welfare, no government education, no government funding of social security, Medicare, post office, etc. All these other functions are performed by the family, the church and the marketplace.

2. There will be no graduated income tax. The only tax is a uniform “head tax” paid equally by all who live in the country to pay for protection (national defense) and punishment of evil doers. There are no real estate taxes, no gasoline tax, no sales tax, no tariffs, etc.

Criminal Justice

1. Criminal justice is carried out by the states and local governments for all crimes committed in their respective jurisdictions following the biblical pattern by using the following biblical sanctions only, as there are no other means of criminal justice in the Bible:

- a. Restitution
- b. Flogging
- c. Indentured servitude
- d. Capital Punishment

2. National criminal justice is exercised by the Federal Gov-

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ernment for treason, defense against attacking nations, terrorists, etc.—only those crimes that are outside individual state jurisdictions. The FBI, CIA, FDA, etc., and other Federal agencies that protect the righteous or punish evil according to God’s law may retain their usefulness. Congress would debate this, recognizing that there will be differences of opinion. However, all government functions must lie within the protection/punishment parameters.

Current government functions assumed by other institutions.

This biblical approach to civil government provides many new entrepreneurial opportunities. After each function listed is the institution that is biblically accountable for carrying out that particular responsibility.

1. Education (family)
2. Welfare (family, church)
3. Regulating the economy (marketplace)
4. Health care (marketplace)
5. Care for the environment (marketplace - private ownership of property)
6. Roads and highways (marketplace)
7. Post office (marketplace)
8. Other current governmental functions are all dropped by Congress if they fall outside the purview of punishment/protection.

This, obviously, is not a final word on a model for a biblical constitution. My attempt in this chapter is to introduce ideas that will open discussion and help us to begin to think biblically about the United States Constitution rather than simply accept-

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ing our current document as infallible. I fully realize that the ideas I have proposed will be viewed by some as unworkable, impractical and impossible, even the thoughts of a madman!

However, I have lived long enough to have seen our society in America change radically. Cultural change is inevitable, and we are invariably resistant to that change, as we should be if change takes us away from God's ways. The change I am proposing, on the other hand, is an attempt to take us closer to the pattern for civil government that God has revealed to us in the Scripture. I am offering a biblical vision for our future as a nation, which every Christian can begin to develop.

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Conclusion

Some years ago, when I first began to investigate what kind of civil government the Bible advocates, I was initially persuaded by Leonard Verduin that the pluralistic position was correct. Verduin is an eloquent, persuasive writer, and his attacks on the theocratic position were very convincing.

However, as I eventually read and re-read books by Stephen Perks and Dennis Woods, mentioned in the following Bibliography, the theocratic position became an increasingly attractive option to me. I wrestled with this question for a period of several years.

As I eventually came to see the inherent weaknesses in both positions, as I have delineated in the forgoing chapters, I realized that Verduin was attacking *historical* theocracy, which was really not theocracy at all, but *ecclesiocracy*, the rule of the church. The problem of no liberty of conscience so prevalent in historical theocracy is not present in biblical theocracy, which is the rule of the sovereign God, not the rule of the church.

On the other hand, the pluralist problem of the impossibility of religious neutrality cannot be solved. Until a god is officially

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established, the battle between the God of Christianity and Satan, the god of all other religions, will rage among the population.

So, this book advocates, not historical theocracy, but biblical theocracy. Jesus indeed rules over the nations. Let us acknowledge that fact throughout our land and in our founding documents so there can be no mistake.

Possible Reactions

There are several possible reactions you may have had to the conclusions arrived at in this book, possibly including one of the following:

1. “This won’t work, even if it were true. It isn’t practical. To think that this is a workable plan is ridiculous. You could never get even a small percentage of the population to agree to such a scheme.”

This, of course, is undeniably true. However, our task is not to convince anyone of anything but to simply try to understand the ways of God ourselves in every area of life and say “Yes, Lord” to what He is doing. Without thinking, our tendency is to go about our responsibilities in the customary “way of the world,” the way all those around us are functioning in various facets of life, or to follow our own best idea of how we should live. When it comes to politics and civil government, we don’t even think to ask. “What does God want in this sphere and how do you know?”

Without a spiritual awakening in our country, the ideas presented here will obviously not be implemented and any attempt to do so would be a foolish waste of time and energy. As earnest Christians in America today, this verse from Psalm 119 is appropriate for us: “*Make me understand the way of Your precepts; so shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.*” Our mission is

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to first *understand* the general, overall plan of God for civil government as laid out in Scripture and then *meditate*, or continue to think about, how this may eventually be applied in America.

This is doing nothing more than having a vision of where God is eventually taking us in regards to civil government, nothing more than what is mentioned about the sons of Issachar in 1 Chronicles 12:32, “who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.” Make no mistake—Jesus will one day reign, in experience, over all the nations of the world, just as He now reigns in fact.

2. You may have responded like this: “Wow! We’ve got to get to work. We’ve got to let Christians know about this. Time is wasting!”

The opposite extreme from “This won’t work” is “Let’s make it happen,” and they are both equally misguided. With no momentum from the Holy Spirit, our efforts are a gigantic exercise in the flesh, trying to produce results without the means to do so—the Holy Spirit deciding to move.

When God brings His awakening, there will be no questions, no necessity for promotion, no need for recruiting or pumping people up. All we will do is hem up the mighty flood of God’s Spirit as He sweeps away all extraneous debris before His mighty power!

Ecclesiastes 3 says, “*To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven . . . a time to break down, and a time to build up.*” If God’s purpose, as we have seen, is that Jesus rule over the nations of the world, our civil government will be broken down and rebuilt, because in its present form—a pluralistic government—the reign of King Jesus is not allowed. This “breaking down” may or may not be peaceful, as in a result of revival, but the flood of the Spirit of God will ultimately sweep

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the wreckage all away.

When this occurs, how do we rebuild the government of our nation? What kind of a constitution do we need? Then, an understanding of God's law will be crucial. Then, those sons of Issachar who know it, have ruminated on it, endlessly discussed it and over the years have answered all questions in their minds, will be ready for their time in history. Their wisdom and understanding will be crucial in God's great eternal purpose. They were created for such a time as this. May we, and all our descendants, be these spiritual sons of Issachar.

The following bibliography has been helpful to me in the study of this subject.

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Appendix

The following web posting illustrates how the private sector can successfully absorb the non-biblical functions the civil government currently performs. The idea of keeping civil government within its biblical limits of punishment of lawbreakers and protection of the innocent is not far-fetched or impossible, just unfamiliar. The source of the article is footnoted.

Detroit, Michigan was the city that the free market built. Henry Ford turned the city into a product-producing economic powerhouse. Over time, unions and politicians slowly killed the goose that laid the golden eggs.

It's gotten so bad in Detroit that people who cannot pay their water bills are looking for help from the United Nations. But like liberal politics in general, the UN doesn't have any money. Any money it gets must be taken from other people by force. It's this type of political thinking that is killing some of our nation's most productive cities.

An interesting fact in all of this is that when the water is turned off for non-payment, the next day, people come in with

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money to pay their bill. The people are used to the government doing things for them. Unfortunately, the cash cow is sick. Decades of sticking it to the productive members of society have hurt those most in need.

Liberals believe the way to turn around Detroit is more government spending, making the people even more dependent and reducing the incentive for companies to invest and people to work.

The best way to save Detroit is to free it from liberal economic policies.

It's been done before. Consider the city of Sandy Springs, Georgia. Sandy Springs was once part of the city of Atlanta. Atlanta was using its northern neighbor as a cash cow for its own bloated government.

For years Sandy Springs tried to separate itself from the city of Atlanta. "Legislators representing Atlanta and southwestern Fulton County, who feared tax revenue that would be lost from incorporation, blocked the bills using the procedural requirement that all local legislation be approved first by a delegation of representatives from the affected area." This was when Democrats were in power in the state.

This all changed when the Republicans took over the state. A referendum was held on June 21, 2005, and residents voted 94% to 6% in favor of incorporation.

Joe Kent writes the following in "The Town that Privatized Everything":

"In 2005, Sandy Springs outsourced almost all functions of the city government (with the exception of police and fire) to a single company, which runs the town. That company is in charge of running all the vital functions of government, from running the parks, to paving the roads, and even 911 calls!

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“The town is run very efficiently, with zero backlogs in permit requests. Call the city, and you’ll be surprised to find that you actually get a friendly person on the other line! The city has a 24/7 non-automated customer service hot line which fields about 6,000 calls per month. It also has a state of the art traffic system with cameras and a high tech command center.

“When the project first started, the University of Georgia estimated that the city would need 828 employees. But because the town is managed by a private company, they’ve cut their workforce down to just 471 people. Besides fire and police, the city only has eight full-time public employees.

“Because of this efficiency, Sandy Springs generates huge surpluses. They have no unfunded liabilities. The city specifically decided not to use the traditional pension model – a model which has put almost every government across America in an unsustainable pension crisis. Instead, employees can choose their own 401K package to prepare for retirement, if they wish.

“If part of the government performs poorly, the city can fire that company, and bid the contract to another company. In 2011, the city said farewell to the main company that was managing the vital functions of government CH2M Hill, and opted to go with another company. This saved the city over a million dollars.”

Cities around the world are looking to Sandy Springs as a model for city government reform. It’s time for the people of Detroit to take a trip down south.

Read more at: <http://godfatherpolitics.com/16032/southern-city-can-save-detroit>

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