

IS THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD “ALL ABOUT GOVERNMENT?”

“It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all of the time; but you can’t fool all of the people all of the time.”

~ Abraham Lincoln

Many of God’s people have been fooled about church government. It seems, most of them were deceived for a while, and many still are. But as President Abraham Lincoln said, you can’t fool all of the people all of the time. Eventually, God’s truth sets us free (John 8:32)! And now many are beginning to have their eyes opened regarding the right and wrong forms of church government.

Many people have asked me if God’s Kingdom is really “ALL about government.” Why? Probably because it has become popular for some leaders to frequently say it is. This statement has been used regularly for about 40 years now, to bolster the power of a man (or men) at the “top,” and to shore-up their teachings on church government, but recently it has been used even more often. When applied exclusively to God, there is a certain ring of truth to this statement. Even then, Jesus and the apostles taught that the two Great Statutes – to love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and to love your fellow man as yourself – are the greatest commandments of all; and that **ALL the law and prophets hang upon these two commandments** (Deut.6:5, Lev.19:18, and Matt.22:37-40).

This is why Paul taught that love is the single greatest and most enduring fruit of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.13:13). And it is why John said, “God so loved the world that He gave...(John 3:16).” The sign of evidence that we are Christ’s true disciples is NOT “government” – it is LOVE toward one another (Jn.13:35). **Is it “all about government,” or is government one more facet towards learning what it really is all about – learning how to properly show love and respect toward God and one another?**

Certainly God will and does rule, and that is the government of God. But when the expression “Everything is about government” is used, it is usually NOT used to glorify God – but TO EMPOWER MEN! Therefore a growing number of people are beginning to question this oft repeated teaching, in light of the slanted way in which it is

used. Why are so many of God's people repeatedly subjected to a barrage of sermons and articles that focus on the "authority of the ministry," and especially upon the "authority of the leading church leader(s)" at "Headquarters?" During a brief period of time when humility seemed to be present, the use of this expression about church government was admitted as being inappropriate and inaccurate. As was said by the Global Church of God in 1993, on page 7 of its booklet "*Church Government and Church Unity*," under the section The MISUSE of Church Government: "Everything seemed to become 'the Government of God.'" WOW! What a refreshingly frank admission it was at the time. Now, some of the very quotes that were taught as being an inappropriate focus upon power in that booklet are being used again!

It has been explained that the word kingdom means – or is – a government. However, the meaning of the word that is translated "kingdom" in the Bible actually means "royal family." The Kingdom of God is the Royal Family of God, first and foremost. Christ came to reveal God to us as FATHER, and thus revealed Him to us through a family term of endearment. He is our Father, our God and our Great Dad, our Great Grand Pa Pa, our Daddy Father God who is in charge of His family, as well as being the Almighty Eternal God.

Certainly there will be submission to God's government in the Royal Family, or Kingdom of God, and submission toward one another in harmony. **But it is quite a vain idea and a preposterous thing for a man to think that he or his organization IS the very government and authority of God in the flesh. To me – based upon God's Word – that is blasphemous and idolatrous. ONLY Christ had such authority in the flesh!**

NEVER did any apostle ever seek to arrogate to himself such power and authority, as to claim to be God's very government in the flesh! How arrogant. It was Peter who said the oversight of the Church should be done willingly, not by compulsion or for money – and not as lords over them, but as examples (1 Pet.5:2-3).

No prophet ever made such an arrogant and presumptuous claim to be the very government of God on earth, not even Moses, for Moses was the most meek man in all the earth (Num.12:3). Those seeking such preeminence seek an evil thing! To my knowledge, in the past only the Popes, or dictating religious power-mongers (and those who walked in their footsteps), have ever tried to take such power and authority to themselves, or to claim that their authority, their interpretations of scripture, their decisions were the very government of God on earth! **What arrogation!**

Some will ask: But didn't Jesus give the power to bind and loose to Peter? Isn't that where the church leaders derive all their authority? Dear reader: Do you know?