

EBC – Adult Bible Study
“Spirit Empowered, Godly Living in an Ungodly World”
2019-2020

Living with the “Secular” and the “Sacred” together – Government’s purpose and responsibility.

VI. Where Do We Get Our Understanding of Government contrasted with the people? – Part 3

Note: From the Declaration of Independence: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that **among these** are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men,

E. Review of the evolution of freedom

1. Magna Carta

- i. Clause 1: The liberties of the English Church. ... freedom of the Church from Governmental Interference
- b. Clauses 39 & 40: The right to trial by jury and not to have rights or possessions taken from him except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land and no denying or delaying right or justice.
- c. established limits on King John (limited government)
- d. promoted the belief that a Kings rule was not absolute
- e. provided a basis for the later development of Parliament

2. Two steps forward one step back

- a. The Divine right of Kings as a political theory became popular again
- b. The **divine right** of kings, or **divine-right** theory of kingship, is a political and religious doctrine of royal and political legitimacy. It asserts that a monarch is subject to no earthly authority, deriving his **right** to rule directly from the will of God.

3. **THE PETITION OF RIGHT** (1628) extended the rights of "commoners" to have a voice in the government.

4. The Glorious Revolution also called the bloodless revolution (1688-1689) replacing a Catholic king with a protestant monarchy

5. The English Bill of Rights (1688) guaranteed free elections and rights for citizens accused of crime.

6. As the Protestant Reformation questions the practices of the Catholic Church

- a. The printing press allows new ideas to spread quickly and easily

- b. Philosophy is allowed to develop especially in the areas of individual liberty and equality

7. John Locke (1632-1704)

- a. English philosopher and political theorist and a Writer

- b. The “Two Treatises of Government” (1690) offered theories redefining the nature of government
 - i. Rejecting the divine right of kings,
 - the natural rights of individuals limited the power of the king. The king did not hold absolute power
 - a ruler gains authority through the consent of the governed
 - societies form governments by mutual agreement.
 - o Thus, a sort of social contract exists between the rulers and the ruled.
 - o **Social contract** theory says that people live together in society in accordance with an agreement that establishes moral and political rules of behavior.
 - o For their part, the people must obey the laws of their rulers.
 - ii. Locke favored a representative government such as the English Parliament, which had a hereditary House of Lords and an elected House of Commons.
 - iii. The Purpose of government is to protect the natural rights of the people
 - all individuals are equal in the sense that they are born with certain "inalienable" natural rights. That is, rights that are God-given and can never be taken or even given away.
 - Among these fundamental natural rights, are "life, liberty, and property" and self-preservation.
 - o By "property," he meant more than land and goods that could be sold, given away, or even confiscated by the government under certain circumstances. Property also referred to ownership of one's self, which included a right to personal well-being.
 - o He and others had used pursuit of happiness to describe freedom of opportunity as well as the duty to help those in want.
 - o he says individuals have a duty to respect the property (and lives and liberties) of others even in the state of **nature**, a duty he traces to **natural law**.
 - o **Natural law** and **natural rights** coexist, but **natural law** is primary, commanding respect for the **rights** of others.
 - iv. But, Locke concluded, if a government persecutes its people with "a long train of abuses" over an extended period, the people have the right to resist that government, alter or abolish it, and create a new political system.

F. Summary – Understanding of Roles Changes of the Church

1. The Roman Catholic Church had a large influence on life in the Middle Ages

- a. It was the center of every village and town.
 - i. To become a king, vassal, or knight you went through a religious ceremony.
 - ii. Church leaders ran schools and hospitals.

- iii. Church officials, kings, and nobles governed western Europe. Church leaders were also lords and vassals. Church leaders advised the king.
 - iv. People who disobeyed the pope or church laws lost their membership in the church. They would also lose their political rights. (inquisition)
 - b. The secularization and reclamation of religion
 - i. When bishops died, the noble took over the office and the land. The noble could choose a relative or sell the office to the highest bidder. Men who were not religious often held church jobs. They did not keep the Church rules.
 - ii. In the early 1000s, monks of Cluny said the Church, and not kings or nobles, should choose Church leaders
 - iii. Pope Gregory was a powerful politician, continued the reforms began by the monks. He ruled from Rome with the help of the College of Cardinals.
 - iv. Gregory had two goals.
 - He first wanted to rid the Church of control by kings and nobles. In 1075, Gregory stated that the Pope was above all kings and nobles.
 - He also wanted to increase the Pope's power over Church officials.
 - o Gregory had Church leaders who bought or sold offices removed. Bishops and priests could no longer marry.
 - o Only the Pope chose bishops and other Church leaders. If you did not obey the Pope you were removed from office.
 - v. Some kings resisted his changes. The kings lost some power to the Pope.
2. The Church is free from Governmental Interference
- a. First 2 Parts of the 1st Amendment to the Constitution - Congress shall make no law
 - i. respecting an establishment of religion,
 - ii. or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;
 - b. The establishment of a Christian nation
 - i. We are a Christian nation in the sense that our understanding of the following come from a biblical foundation not out of Buddhism, Confucianism, or primitive animism.
 - human nature
 - the purpose of individual life,
 - our convictions about right and wrong,
 - ii. those who came here in the 17th and 18th centuries did so for religious freedom
 - iii. they did not want a theocracy! It was to be a religious society, but one which incorporated a *secular* political order!
 - c. Reasoning for a Christian nation.

- i. The human person is forever, lives in the here and now, and also in the hereafter.
- ii. We are here for 70-80 years.
 - Earth is the training ground for life eternal. Such training is the essence of religion, and it's much too important to be entrusted to any secular agency.
 - government's role should maintain the peace of society and protect equal rights to life, liberty, and property.
 - The more liberty one has, the more opportunity to order their souls aright.
 - Ac 17:26-27
- d. Therefore, biblical understanding of man's origin, nature, etc. is the basic materials used to establish political philosophy that works in our social order.
 - i. It is the religion of dialectical materialism that is the take-off point for the Marxian theory and practice of the total state.
 - ii. Hinduism is basic to the structures of Indian society.

G. Summary – Understanding of Roles Changes of the Individual

1. All men are created Equal endowed by our creator with unalienable rights

a. Created

- i. The world was created by a good God
- ii. Man was also created and given responsibility
 - for the proper ordering of the garden - Work
 - for filling the earth
 - holds him accountable for use of resources - property
 - holds him accountable for how he interacts with others – natural law, property, pursuit of happiness

b. Equal

- i. Justice - the rule of law,
 - the same rules apply to all
 - same punishment for law breakers
- ii. Rights - Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

2. Individuality in Community

- a. Necessity for rules in a social order characterized by liberty and private property
- b. One purpose of the Ten commandments - how people are to live together
 - i. Impossible for society to exist where each is looking to take advantage of or lie to, steal from, and/or kill one another
 - ii. No society will eliminate crime b/c of the nature of fallen man
 - iii. A good society is one where most people most of the time tell the truth, keep their word, fulfill their contracts, don't covet their neighbor's goods, and occasionally lend a helping hand.

- iv. The fall of a society happens when more than a small fraction of the people exercises criminal tendencies is on the skids.
- c. Prosperity abounds to a moral society (individuals in community)
 - i. freedom, private property, and the work ethic found expression in Western custom, law, government, and the economy
 - ii. We prospered to the degree that we practiced the freedom we professed
 - iii. Prosperity abounded to the point where Biblical admonishment about the rich came to bear
 - iv. Biblical teaching concerning economic well-being
 - We are created with the capacity to choose
 - o The desire for economic well-being is not idolatry
 - o it does warn against idolizing wealth or power
 - We are given stewardship over resources
 - it teaches the importance of work
 - it teaches our need to be equitable to all
 - it teaches us to love mercy
 - v. One nation prospering by following Biblical principles does not cause another nation to be poor
 - Prosperity could not have come from the poor nation b/c they didn't have anything to take
 - Prosperity comes from productivity
 - Productivity comes from freedom
 - Freedom enables people to produce more, consume more, enjoy more, and give away more