

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE CHRISTAIN LIFE AND THE CHURCH LIFE  
UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD

Message One

**The Universal Government of God**

Scripture Reading: Dan. 4:26, 34-35; 1 Pet. 1:2, 17; 2:21-25; 3:15; 4:12, 15-19; 5:5-8

- I. We must come to “know that the heavens do rule” – Dan. 4:26:**
- A. The kingdom of the heavens is a realm where the heavens exercise authority – Matt. 4:17; 5:3:
    - 1. God rules and exercises authority from the heavens as His dwelling place – 1 Kings 8:39.
    - 2. The throne of God’s authority is in the heavens – Psa. 103:9; Rev. 4:1-2.
    - 3. The kingdom of the heavens is the reign of the heavens where God dwells; it is the rule of the heavens.
  - B. God’s “dominion is an eternal dominion / And His kingdom is from generation to generation” – v. 34:
    - 1. “He does according to His will in the army of heaven / And among the inhabitants of the earth” – v. 35a.
    - 2. “There is no one who can resist His hand / Or say to Him, What are You doing?” – v. 35b.
  - C. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for the preeminence of Christ, we are under God’s heavenly rule; we need to realize this and be submissive to God’s heavenly rule – v. 37.
- II. The Epistles of 1 and 2 Peter are on the universal government of God:**
- A. The subject of 1 Peter is the Christian life under the government of God, showing us the government of God especially in His dealings with His chosen people – 1:2:
  - B. The subject of 2 Peter is the divine provision and the divine government, showing us that as God is governing us, He supplies us with whatever we need – 1:1-4; 3:13.
  - C. God governs by judging; this judgment of God is for the carrying out of His government – 1 Pet. 1:17; 4:17:
    - 1. Because 1 and 2 Peter are concerned with the government of God, in these Epistles the judgment of God and of the Lord is referred to repeatedly as one of the essential items – 1 Pet. 2:23; 4:5-6, 17; 2 Pet. 2:3-4, 9; 3:7.
    - 2. Through various kinds of judgments, the Lord God will clear up the entire universe and purify it so that He may have a new heaven and a new earth for a new universe filled with His righteousness for His delight – v. 13.
  - D. The judgment in 1 Pet. 1:17, which is carried out by the Father, is not the future judgment but is the present, daily judgment of God’s governmental dealings with His children:
    - 1. The Father has regenerated us to produce a holy family – a holy Father with holy children – vv. 3, 15, 17.

2. As holy children, we should walk in a holy manner of life (vv. 15-16); otherwise, in His government God the Father will become the Judge and will deal with our unholiness – 4:17; Heb. 12:9-10.
- E. The disciplinary judgment in the government of God begins from the house of God – 1 Pet. 4:17:
1. God judges everything that does not match His government; therefore, in this age we, the children of God, are under the daily judgment of God – 1:17.
  2. God uses fiery ordeals to deal with the believers in the judgment of His governmental administration, which begins from His own house – 4:12, 17.
  3. The purpose of this judgment is that we would live according to God in spirit – v. 6.

**III. In his writings Peter combines the Christian life and God's government, revealing that the Christian life and the government of God go together as a pair – 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:21, 24; 3:15; 4:17; 5:5-8:**

- A. The Triune God has passed through a long process in Christ and has become the life-giving Spirit to indwell us; this is for our Christian life – John 1:14; 14:17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.
- B. At the same time, the Triune God is still the Creator of the universe and its Ruler – 1 Pet. 4:19.
- C. Although we have been born of God to have a spiritual life and to be a new creation, we are still in the old creation – John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6; 2 Cor. 5:17:
  1. For this reason we need God's governmental dealings – 1 Pet. 1:17.
  2. In order for the Christian life to grow, we need the discipline of God's government – 2:2; 4:17; 2 Pet. 1:5-7.

**IV. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He lived a human life that was absolutely under the government of God, and He committed everything related to Him to God's government – John 6:38; 1 Pet. 2:21-24:**

- A. The Lord kept committing all His insults and injuries to Him who judges righteously in His government, the righteous God, to whom He submitted Himself; He put His trust in this righteous One, recognizing His government – v. 23.
- B. When God counseled Christ as a man, Christ's inward parts were one with God and instructed Him through His contact with God – Psa. 16:7; Isa. 50:4.

## Message Two

### **The Christian Life under the Government of God**

Scripture Reading: 1 Pet. 1:6-8, 17; 4:13-19; 5:6

- I. As believers in Christ and children of God, we should live a Christian life under the government of God – John 3:15; 1:12-13; 1 Pet. 4:13-19; 5:6-8.**
- II. The Epistles of Peter reveal the Christ who enables us to take God’s governmental dealings administered through sufferings – 1 Pet. 1:6-8; 2:3-4, 19, 21-25; 3:18, 22; 4:1, 15-16; 5:8-9.**
- III. We should be humbled under the mighty hand of God, which carries out the government of God – v. 6:**
  - A. In verse 6 *the mighty hand of God* refers to God’s administrating hand seen especially in His judgment – 1:17; 4:17.
  - B. To be humbled under God’s mighty hand is to be made humble by God; however, we must cooperate with God’s operation and be willing to be made humble, lowly, under His mighty hand – 5:6.
- IV. As we live under the government of God, we will be made sorrowful by various trials and experience the proving of our faith – 1:6-7:**
  - A. The trials in verse 6 are sufferings that test the quality of our life as believers.
  - B. These trials are used by God to prove and try our faith to see whether we will follow Christ in suffering for doing good – 2:19-23; 3:14-18.
  - C. The emphasis in 1 Peter 1:7 is not on faith but on the proving of faith by trials that come through sufferings.
- V. Although we have not seen the Lord Jesus Christ, we love Him, and although we do not see Him at present, we believe, exalting with “joy that is unspeakable and full of glory” – v. 8:**
  - A. It is a wonder and a mystery that we, the believers, love One whom we have not seen.
  - B. We love Him whom we have not seen because of believing, because of the faith that has been infused into us through hearing the living word of God – Gal. 3:2.
  - C. This faith is under the proving, the trying, mentioned in 1 Pet. 1:7.
  - D. Joy full of glory is joy immersed in glory; it is joy that is filled with the expression of Christ – v. 8.
- VI. We should commit our souls to the faithful Creator – 4:19:**
  - A. God can preserve our soul, and His loving and faithful care accompanies His justice in His governmental administration.
  - B. While God judges us in His government, He cares for us faithfully in His love; as we are suffering His disciplinary judgment, we should commit our souls to the faithful care of our Creator – Matt. 10:28; 11:28-29.
- VII. In the death of Christ we have died to sins so that in the resurrection of Christ we might live to righteousness under God’s government – 1 Pet. 2:24:**
  - A. God’s government is established upon righteousness (Psa. 89:14a); as God’s people living under His government, we must live a righteous life.

- B. The expression *live to righteousness* is related to the fulfilling of God's governmental requirements – 1 Pet. 2:24:
1. We were saved so that we might live rightly under the government of God, that is, in a way that matches the righteous requirements of His government.
  2. In Christ's death we have been separated from sins, and in His resurrection we have been enlivened so that in our Christian life we might live spontaneously to righteousness under the government of God – Rom. 6:8, 10-11, 18; Eph. 2:6; John 14:19; 2 Tim. 2:11.