

*"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (ISA 9:6).*

Isaiah is speaking here of a Savior - a wonderful Prince of peace coming to rule over a kingdom. This kingdom would be made up of a people wholly submitted to the Prince's supreme authority. And the Prince himself would provide loving counsel to those He ruled over, guiding and directing their lives.

Of course, the Prince Isaiah speaks of here is Christ. Jesus' kingdom has indeed come, existing in the hearts of His people. And the government of all creation rests on our wonderful Savior's shoulders.

Isaiah adds, *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end ... and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever"* (verse 7). From now to the end of time, Jesus is going to rule over His kingdom with divine order.

Now, if Christ reigns as the supreme authority over His kingdom, and we are His subjects, then our lives must be governed by Him. What does it mean, exactly, for us to be governed by Jesus?

According to the dictionary, to govern means "to guide, to direct, to control all actions and behavior of those under authority." In short, Jesus must be allowed to control all of our actions and behavior. **He must guide and direct our lives daily, including our every thought, word and deed.**

# Governed by the Word of God

## Part One of Two Messages

Jesus also rules the nations of the world. The Bible tells us, *"He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves"* (PSA 66:7). *"The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all"* (PSA 103:19).

Don't be fooled - our country is not ruled by Republicans, Democrats or any human authority. It is not controlled by Wall Street or big business entities. No power, earthly or supernatural, rules America or any other nation. God alone is in control. He sits as King of kings and Lord of lords, ruling and reigning over all creation from His heavenly throne.

I am amused whenever I hear politicians boast about our country's power - how we brought down the Iron Curtain, how we defeated communism, how we established ourselves as the most powerful nation on earth. We did nothing of the kind. All the nations, kings, dictators and presidents of the world are mere specks of dust in God's eyes. Our Lord rules over them all, pulling down one authority and raising up another.

*"Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing .... All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity"* (ISA 40:15, 17).

Notice here that God uses the image of a balance or scale. He sits on one side of the scale, while on the other side He places all the nations of the earth from throughout history. He's saying, "Go ahead - try to measure My might against the powers of the world. Take all the weapons and armaments of humankind, all the armies and navies of the nations, and put them on the scale. Next to Me, these puny things are no more than a mound of dust."

*"The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God"* (ISA 52:10).

Recently, communist Chinese leaders have been jailing thousands of members of a religious cult called Falun Gong. In the process, Chinese officials have also jailed scores of Christians, mistaking them as cultists because

of their passive ways and worship practices. When an outcry began over this injustice, China's leaders turned a deaf ear.

God has news for the Chinese government. They may think they can outlaw Jesus and control His kingdom - but He sees their nation as mere dust. He blew away the Iron Curtain like a pile of dust, and He can blow away the Bamboo Curtain just as easily.

I believe it won't be long before China's communist government is history. God will blow down prison doors, blow away leaders from positions of authority, and establish His kingdom from one end of the nation to the other. Millions of godly Chinese believers will be able to shout freely, "Our God reigns!"

Of course, we need to pray fervently for our persecuted brothers and sisters in China. But we also must be confident that God is still in control of all the nations.

### **Do Not Think for One Moment That Satan Rules This or Any Other Nation.**

All across America today, we're seeing awful moral decay, the rise of the occult, rampant sexual deviations, raging "in your face" atheism. Some Christians fear that the hordes of hell are slowly taking over our nation, establishing satan's kingdom of darkness.

We need not worry. Isaiah assures us, *"The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers ... How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! .... Thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms"* (ISA 14:5,12,15-16).

Satan may be having his day now - shaking nations with an outpouring of wickedness, weakening multitudes with immorality and lust. But that's all going to change in a single moment, according to God's time. Even now, the devil and all his demons are under the Lord's thumb. They are limited in power, allowed to go only so far. And ultimately, theirs is a kingdom of mere dust.

Hezekiah declared, *"O Lord of hosts, God of Israel ... thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth"* (ISA 37:16).

Yet satan works overtime to convince us he rules over the kingdom of the earth. He even tried this with Jesus. In tempting Christ, he took him up to a high mountain where *"he sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and [satan] saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me"* (MATT 4:8-9).

This vision had to be some kind of apparition satan conjured up. After all, no one can see a whole kingdom from a mountaintop, much less all the kingdoms of the world. The experience didn't faze Jesus in the least. He was God in flesh, present at the very creation - so He knew satan wasn't in control. Therefore, the world wasn't the devil's to give. It was a lie, a deceitful fantasy.

Indeed, Jesus knew that satan rules only by permission of almighty God. And Christ knew the ultimate outcome of the Father's plan. Whenever God was finished with the devil, He would send His archangel Michael to take him prisoner. Then the Lord Himself would cast satan into hell, along with all his demons and followers, and seal its gates for eternity.

Beloved, our God is not one bit anxious about satan. He isn't fretting over what we see as an evil takeover of our nation. With just one word from our Lord's mouth, satan will be gone forever, tormented for eternity. Therefore, we are to fear no evil.

### **In No Other Kingdom Does God Rule as Supremely And as Powerfully as in His Own Kingdom - the One He Has Established in the Hearts of His People.**

Jesus said, *"Behold, the kingdom of God is within you"* (LK 17:21). And it is within this kingdom - the realm of our hearts - that Christ rules supreme over His people, guiding us, healing us, governing our actions and behavior.

*"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end"* (ISA 9:7). I noted earlier that this verse speaks of Jesus' endless rule

throughout eternity. Yet it also has another significant meaning: We must always increase our submission to our king's rule.

Can you honestly say that day after day, Jesus' government over you is increasing? Are you bringing your behavior more and more under His authority? Or are you defying His rule whenever it collides with your flesh?

Let's look now at how God governs His kingdom. You may wonder - if Jesus is in heaven, ruling in all authority at the right hand of the Father, how does He go about governing His kingdom here on earth?

We find the answer in the book of Hebrews. The author tells us that in the Old Testament, God spoke to His people through the prophets. But today the Lord has chosen to speak through His Son: *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds"* (HEB 1:1-2).

Jesus is God's explicit message to us - the divine Word made flesh. In turn, the Father has sent the Holy Ghost to us today to remind us of the words Jesus spoke while on earth. Thus, **Jesus governs us by the written, revealed Word of God. The Bible is our ruler's scepter, by which He makes His word known to us.**

Scripture says of Jesus, *"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power"* (verse 3). *"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"* (HEB 4:12).

If you want to hear the testimony of a man who was governed by God's written Word, you can find it in Psalm 119. David writes:

*"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee"* (verse 11). *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"* (verse 105). *"I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way"* (verse 128).

**"Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me"** (verse 133). **"I rejoice at thy word"** (verse 162).

We all know about the problems David experienced in his life. But even though this man faced awful times of failure and confusion, he continually allowed himself to be governed by God's Word - and the Lord always brought David's life back to divine order. David stumbled, but he kept his life under the supreme authority of the Scriptures.

Our society today would have nothing of the sort. The Bible has become an object of mockery and derision. It has been outlawed in our schools, courts and public places. As a result, America has no supreme authority. Our ship of state floats along aimlessly without any moral rudder.

This was brought home to me recently when I was summoned for jury duty. During the juror-selection process, a lawyer told us the following: "You may believe that when a witness places his hand on the Bible and swears to tell the truth 'so help me God,' he is obligated to do so. But that oath doesn't bind anyone to speak the truth. In fact, it has no meaning whatsoever."

Invoking the authority of the Bible in a court of law today is merely an empty exercise. Moreover, it has become illegal. Consider the example of a Christian judge in Alabama, who was ordered to remove a plaque on his courtroom wall inscribed with the Ten Commandments.

A schoolteacher in the Bronx recently lost her job for merely placing a Bible on her desk. This woman could have legally displayed pornography, the Koran or occult literature to her students. But our society gets absolutely enraged whenever God's Holy Word is merely mentioned. (By contrast, if you carry a Bible in Russia nowadays - whether on the streets or in the halls of government - people will ask if you can spare a copy for them.)

Isaiah writes, **"He shall judge among the nations"** (ISA 2:4). You may not believe that God will judge our nation for shedding the blood of 25 million babies through abortion. But the Bible is very clear on this

matter of despising His word: **"This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord .... He shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces"** (ISA 30:9,14).

America's stock market may soar. Our economic boom may continue for a season. But God says, "If you despise My word, I will break down your structures overnight. I will wither your nation's strength the way a potter smashes his vessel to pieces." The time will come when the balloon of prosperity will burst.

**"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass ... but the word of our God shall stand for ever"** (ISA 40:6-8). Everything in this life is eventually going to burn and fade away. The only thing that will stand is God's Word.

#### **Far Worse Than a Nation Despising God's Word Is a Child of God Who Lightly Esteems His Word.**

Fewer and fewer Christians are allowing their lives to be governed by God's Word. This problem has become a spectacle in the church today, as multitudes of Christians are no longer willing to sit in God's house to hear sound doctrine preached. They're easily bored, wanting entertainment and ten-minute sermons instead.

Such Christians are building their houses on sand, with no real foundation. They have spent years in the church, yet they know very little of God's Word. This is why so many people end up traveling across the country seeking "a word from God" through some celebrated prophet.

I want to sound a very loud warning here: Many such Christians have fallen into grave deception. They have been deceived by the flattering words of false prophets, who speak not from God's mind but from their own. These so-called prophets are nothing more than charismatic fortune-tellers. And many are clairvoyants, speaking from a spirit of divination.

How does a believer come to a point of such deception? Consider the Christian who hears God's

Word preached to him clearly. The Word begins to convict him - yet he quickly shakes it off. Why? He has a dream, an ambition of some kind that he isn't willing to bring under subjection to God's Word. He wants to do or be something great, and he doesn't want to endanger his dream.

So, instead, this person goes to a meeting to get a "word" from a prophet. He is thrilled when the prophet tells him things about his life no one could possibly know. Then the prophet begins to tell him amazing things about his future.

This Christian won't judge that prophetic word according to God's Word, because he doesn't know the Scriptures. So, now he is staking his life on a man's word. And the fact is, the so-called prophet's word will never come to pass. That Christian has fallen under a delusion, believing a lie to be the truth because he can't tell the difference.

It is dangerous for you to seek guidance from anyone if you don't know that person's life. Ezekiel warns of what happens to many: **"Thus saith the Lord God; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols ... because they are all estranged from me through their idols"** (EZ 14:4-5).

God's Word condemns every fleshly ambition. And His Spirit is faithful to expose every hidden lust to you.

But if you refuse to come under the supreme rule of His Word, He states very clearly: "If you go to someone who is known to give words, and you aren't living under the government of My word, I will permit him to speak to you as an idolater. In fact, I'll allow that false prophet's voice to speak directly to your idolatry."

**"For every one of the house of Israel ... which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart ... I the Lord will answer him by myself: and I will set my face against that man ... And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet ... (and) the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of**

*him that seeketh unto him"* (EZ 14:7,9-10).

We see an example of this in the life of wicked King Ahab. When Ahab asked his prophets for a word from the Lord, those false seers gave him only flattering words. They spoke directly to the ambition in Ahab's heart, reinforcing his pride, lust and covetousness.

Scripture tells us something amazing about this scene: *"Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets"* (1.KI 22:23). A spirit had actually stood before the Lord in heaven and said, *"I will persuade them ... I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets"* (verses 21-22).

One discerning brother wrote to our ministry: "If one more 'prophet' comes up to me with 'a word from God,' I'm going to vomit. I have already been given a hundred such words, and none of them have come to pass. It's getting ridiculous."

### **What Is the Lie That So Many Christians Today Are Accepting?**

Paul warns that in the last days, *"God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness"* (2.THESS 2:11-12). What is the lie Paul speaks of here? It is the deception that the Antichrist will be humankind's deliverer.

You may wonder, "How could any Christian be so deluded he would believe the Antichrist is the messiah?" Paul gives the reason in the previous verse: These believers *"received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved"* (verse 10).

Such Christians ignore God's Word, neglecting to come under its governing authority. Thus, they open themselves up to all kinds of deception, and are easily swept up by every wind and wave of doctrine. A minister I deeply respect believes deluded Christians may

actually be the force that brings the Antichrist to power.

I believe you can tell right away if a Christian has no discernment. Let's say you were to gather a group of believers, randomly chosen, to view a videotape of a meeting where bizarre manifestations took place. The things on the tape are inane, silly, crazy, some even bordering on immoral.

Right away, the people who are grounded in Scripture will shake their heads in disbelief. They might even begin weeping or get up and leave the room. But those who have neglected God's Word will applaud what they see. They'll think all the unscriptural manifestations are the work of the Holy Spirit, saying, "Isn't this wonderful?" Yet those grounded in God's Word can discern true manifestations immediately.

I was shocked by a newspaper ad someone sent to our ministry. It read: "This ain't your Mama's church. Services limited to forty-five minutes. Our goal is to make you happy. Come casual. Football updates."

I ask you - how biblically literate will that congregation be five years from now if the only word they hear on Sundays is a ten-minute lecture about human goodness? How will they ever be able to test anything by God's Word if they never learn what it says?

### **The Frightful Things We See Happening Around Us in Both the World and the Church Should Drive Us to God's Word.**

We should desire to be governed by no voice other than the one we find in the Bible. We can't trust even the sweetest inner voice we may hear. Paul says that even if an angel were to bring us a word that's contrary to scripture, we should reject it.

I cling to this attitude especially in my role as a counseling pastor. The Bible is my only handbook. So, when a couple comes to me seeking counseling, I ask them:

"First, do you believe the Bible is the final word in everything we talk about? And second, will you submit to whatever it says? Will you surrender your own feelings to do what God commands?"

The Lord promises, *"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word"* (ISA 66:2). The Hebrew word for trembleth here means to shudder or quake.

Within minutes I can tell which spouse is in subjection to God's Word and which one isn't. I've had the joy of seeing a husband or wife begin to weep as Scripture exposes their condition. I've seen them tremble, wring their hands, shed a flood of tears - all because the Word has convicted them. When that happens, I know the process of healing has begun.

But this kind of brokenness has to take place in both parties. If I see one spouse wrinkling his brow or stiffening his body in resistance to what God's Word says, I know things will only get worse. And the partner who won't submit to Scripture will precipitate the divorce, making reconciliation impossible.

The Scriptures make it abundantly clear: When you submit to God's Holy Word, He fills your life with joy. *"Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word ... he shall appear to your joy"* (ISA 66:5).

Finally, James writes, *"Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls ... But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed"* (JAM 1:21,25).

**Allow your king, Jesus, to govern your life through His word. Then you will be blessed indeed, your life filled with His joy.**

By David Wilkerson  
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