

Kingdoms of Man

Part Twenty-one

(Negotiation)

The example of the early church is the example of a specialized section of the kingdom of man. This example is one that should be applied to every church that exists. That is to say, the example should be applied to every church that exists in the same form as the early church of the time of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people.

And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

(Acts 2:44-47)

I hope that I am not offending anyone, but we do not have very many of these churches in existence today. The churches that exist today have become highly politicized; and they bring to mind the discussion that Jesus had with some of the religious leaders of his day.

And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give?

But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.

And they brought it.

And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

And they said unto him, Caesar's.

And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

And they marvelled at him.

(Mark 12:13-17)

Well, with the whole non-profit thing, there seems to be quite a bit of the operation of the church that is perceived to be things of Caesar. The fear of the LORD seems to have been replaced by the fear of "the man". And, "the man," is the government. Now, I believe in a healthy respect for authority; Jesus taught this, too. Jesus also rendered unto Caesar, the thing that was Caesar's; though, Jesus had a most inspiring (I am jealous that I cannot do this) way of doing the rendering.

And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.

And they were exceeding sorry.

And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

He saith, Yes.

And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

Peter saith unto him, Of strangers.

Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

(Matthew 17:22-27)

So, let us look for a loophole in the matter of, *all things common*. Now that we have seen what some would refer to as, utopia; let us delve into the way things actually behave in the general kingdom of man, for the average citizen. We are not excusing the lack of faith that permeates the church. We are just moving on to the place of existence in what is referred to as, the real world. Let us look at the kingdom of man in a fashion similar to the way that the apostle Paul saw it, during the time of his discourse for the sake of his life.

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.

Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me

patiently.

My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue,

Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

And I said, Who art thou, Lord?

And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

(Acts 26:1-21)

One might think that petitioning for the right to live would be an earth-shaking thing for the apostle Paul, but it was actually just a part of his, so to speak, normal day's work.

Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?

I know that thou believest.

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

(Acts 26:22-29)

Another of the discussions of the apostle Paul gives us another view of the tool that we apply to effect replication of the attitude of the saint, spreading abroad in the kingdoms of man. In this case, the atmosphere was much quieter than the one that existed in the court of king Agrippa. This discussion is closer to the everyday kind of cooperation that we will attempt to elicit from the ones that are called to emulation of the way of Christ.

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said,

For we are also his offspring.

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

(Acts 17:22-31)

In this quieter petition to the men of Athens, the apostle Paul did not achieve total cooperation, but he did set the stage it.

*And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked:
and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.*

So Paul departed from among them.

Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

(Acts 17:32-34)

The key to the discussion that Paul had with king Agrippa, and the one with the men of Mar's hill, is that the apostle Paul was determined to engage his audience in some level of negotiation. The negotiation that the apostle Paul performed is of the same type as the negotiation that the LORD God called for from the children of Israel.

Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

(Isaiah 1:10-20)

Yes, the LORD God did set the stage for negotiations. Negotiation is almost as old as the kingdom of man. The first use of it is during the time of Abel and Cain. In that day, the LORD told Cain that he should master the act of negotiation, over his self.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.

And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

(Genesis 4:3-7)

We, who read the Bible, know that Cain did not prevail in that negotiation session. The sin that was at the door won out over the drive to be pleasing to the LORD.

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?

And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth

to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

(Genesis 4:8-12)

However, though Cain lost one round of negotiation, he did prevail in another one. The negotiation at which Cain prevailed is the negotiation that he had with God.

And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.

And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

(Genesis 4:13-15)

There was no pumping of fists in the air, as a response to Cain's success at that negotiation. There was still the matter of being a fugitive. What Cain had gained, was the ability to continue his biological line in the kingdom of man, for a time. In any case, I am not so sure that it was a matter of Cain's debate style, as much as it was a matter of the LORD'S longsuffering nature. In fact, it is my firm belief that the negotiation happened, from start to finish, in the heart of the LORD; long before Cain ever uttered his lament. I believe that Cain's, seeming, ability to prevail, is a first validation of the truth of Jonah; a truth that we must accept in all our negotiations with, and in, the Spirit.

And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish:

for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

(Jonah 4:2)

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**--- Next, in the Kingdoms of Man --**  
Replication

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