

I. Introduction to Romans and Chapter 13

The first section of Romans, which is chapters 1 through 5, is a short story on the approach to shows how God dealt with the Gentiles in the Old Testament. Then he turns around and shows you how God dealt with the Jews in the Old Testament. The second section, which starts in chapter 6 to chapter 8, we call that the Great Doctrinal Section. This is where Paul begins to lay out for you and for me the difference between what they had in the Old Testament under the law than what we now have in the New Testament under grace. He goes through and he lays out in a very, very, very incredible way all the inside teachings of New Testament salvation in a credible way.

When we get to chapter 9 through chapter 11, we learn that that was the Great Prophetic Section where God then tells you and me as the church exactly what he wants us to understand about the nation of Israel, how God is not finished with the nation of Israel, and all of the aspects that go along with that. Then we come to the Great Practical Section. That is where we are at right now, the Great Section of chapter 12 through chapter 16. We now learn the great principles of how to live our life after we get saved. The whole book of Romans is basically, "Now that we are saved, this is how we ought to view," and then you fill in the blank almost in every chapter.

In chapter 12 through chapter 16, for you and for me, who after we are saved, we have to live on planet earth and go through the things that we go through, he tells us why. We saw in chapter 12 how that our perspective of dealing with the world, how we view it from God's standpoint. We saw two things in chapter 12 as we entered into the Great Practical Section.

1. We saw that our bodies need to be a living sacrifice. We saw how that lays itself out.
2. The second thing we saw was the character qualities that God has that we need to build in our own lives. And we walk through them very carefully.

Now when we get into chapter 13, we are going to learn some of the greatest lessons, I think, and we are going to take our time with this today in this whole chapter, and some of the greatest principles about the Christian's relationship to his government: the powers that be, those that are in authority over you in our own governmental system, our state system, or even at work with the people you work with.

Now I want to begin reading here in chapter 13, and we will come down through the first five verses, but here is what it says, and follow along if you will.

Romans 13:1-5

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Now Father, we thank and praise You for the Lord Jesus Christ and we love You. We thank You for those that have come out today and we pray as we enter into this great chapter, Father, that You will help us glean all the truth from it, that we will leave here today stronger for You and in a better relationship with You. We love You, Father, for all that You have done for us and all that You have given us, and we pray now, Father, You will take this time. These people have come out today, Lord, because they wanted to learn something from You, and I pray, Father, that You will give us that today and help us to understand all that we do. We will give You the honor and the praise and the glory and we will thank You in Jesus' name. We just look forward, Lord, to what You have for us in Jesus' name, Amen.

II. The Christian's Relationship to Government: A Pressing Issue

I do not know today, honestly, of another subject that is probably more prevalent today to us than the aspect of how we should deal with government. It seems like everything hangs on where our country goes in the next couple of years. All you have to do is look around you and you know that our country is completely upside down in just about everything that it tries to do. The picture is certainly not pretty. We have already seen sweeping changes that, very frankly, if you are not grounded in the Word of God and understand the thing that I am going to talk about this morning, they will scare the fire out of you.

We all like to play the blame game. The conservatives like to blame Obama and the progressives and the liberals, and you can turn on your TV programs or read the newspapers and you can find everybody trashing them. Then you have the other people on the other side that want to blame the Bush administration for their woes. You have a final authority in your life to be able to sort it all out. It gets very confusing.

I am a guy that does not know a lot about sports, and I do not follow a lot of the teams like some of you guys do, but one of the things that I do when I go to a ballgame, whether it be the Royals or the Chiefs or whoever, one of the things that I will do is I will buy a program. I will buy a program simply because what I want to do is at least know who is playing where. The program basically shows you where the positions are, and then on top of that, it kind of shows you who is playing where. It gives you a little background on the guy. It tells you his stats and how good he has done or how bad he has done, and it basically puts the ballgame into perspective for you.

Now take that analogy and look at it like this: This is what the Bible does for you when you are dealing with situations like our government. There are a lot of players in it. There are a lot of

people, a lot of circumstances, and a lot of things that we have to look at and understand. The Bible, when dealing with something like this, does for you what a program does for you going to a ballgame.

I am going to give this chapter the attention that it deserves for a couple of reasons. With what is going on in this country and what you and I are going to have to face the next five or ten years, there are some things that you definitely need to begin to understand if you do not already. I look at my job as pastor of this church as to not only train you in the Bible, help you have the best relationship with God that you can, but my job is through the Bible to look long range. When I see things that are coming our way, my job is to try to prepare you for that, that you have a better understanding so you do not get blindsided when something terrible happens, mentally and of course spiritually. That is the first reason I want to spend the time, because I want you to be prepared for what probably is coming our way.

The second thing is this: I want my church to be full of what I call world-aware Christians. I want you to understand on a global concept of what is going on in the world. A couple of, I think it was last Thursday night, maybe it was two Thursday nights ago, when somebody asked the question, I gave you one of the greatest verses in the book of Proverbs that really helps you begin to put things into perspective.

Proverbs 28:5

Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.

Remember I told you that the unsaved world looks at the world, looks at America, looks at the government, and they see it from the worldly standpoint, and many times we get as Christians as confused about it as they are. But the Bible says that when somebody seeks the Lord, and we know what that means—that means getting into your Bible, reading your Bible, coming to Thursday night Bible study, coming to Sunday morning, get everything that you can get—when a person seeks the Lord, the Bible says they understand all things, and that is my goal for you. I want you to be world-aware Christians. I want this church to be a world-aware church. I want you to understand what is going on not only in the world but in our own country and be aware of it simply because God says that you and I should be able to understand all things.

III. Maintaining Perspective in a Corrupt World

You have heard me say many, many times, and you are going to hear it a lot here in the next couple of years as we continue to build upon it, you have heard me talk about the three P's of ministry. I condense them down so they are easy to understand.

- Purpose
- Perspective
- Passion

Of those three, I think personally for me, the hardest one for me, and it is probably, if you will be honest today, the hardest one for you, would be the aspect of perspective. Somebody said something 40 years ago that I have never forgotten, and it is even truer now than it was 40 years

ago. It was a preacher, and I cannot remember his name, but he simply said this: "America is an insane asylum run by the inmates." That was 40 years ago, and I am telling you, the thing that I face, and I am certainly you face it, it is really hard living in the filth and the corruption of this world, staying sane, let alone trying to keep your perspective. We are in the world and we have to face all of the things that go in it.

You know the little phrase, and it is such a good phrase, but the depth of it, the little phrase, "We are in this world but we are not of this world." That is a great little term, and it is so true, and it sounds so good, and it sounds so simple, but the reality is, boy, that is hard. It is hard to keep your perspective. We struggle. We live in a world, and we have our face right up against all of the filth and the corruption. You see it every day in your workplace. You see it every day wherever you go. You cannot drive down the road and look at the billboards and not be impacted by it. You pick up a newspaper and it is there. You see it in the commercials. You see it in the movies. You see it in everything we are faced with. We rub shoulders with some of the most wicked, ungodly people you would ever hope to encounter, and it rubs off on us. Those are the kind of things that help us to lose our perspective.

When I first got out of high school, for about two months before I went into the Army, I went to work in a steel mill, and I worked at a place called Republic Steel. My dad had worked there for 26 years, and I got a job there, and my job was a job of what they called a hand grinder. What they would do is they would make these big billets of steel. They would run them down on, they would pour the steel out. They would run them down on the catwalk, and then they would pick them up on a crane, big bundles of them. They would weigh six or seven tons. There were like nine or ten stations where each station was two hand grinders. What they would do is the crane would come up and he would drop on these big iron billets a whole load of steel, about 20 feet long. We had big hooks that we could turn them with. My job was, for eight to ten hours, that the first thing I would do was I would go down that bar of steel and I would look where there were imperfections, cracks in the steel. I would mark them with a crayon. Then I would do that whole bar, and my partner, he would work the other end toward me. Then what we would do is we would take these big hand grinders and we would grind those cracks out. Then we would turn the steel bar, mark them again, and in a night's time, we would do probably three or four loads of steel.

I will never forget the first night. The steel mill that I worked at had probably been there way before the war. If you have ever been in a steel mill, it is absolutely the filthiest place dirt-wise that you are ever going to be in. I will never forget, I went to work, and I went out and bought me new work boots, went out and bought me new work clothes, had my steel helmet, safety glasses on, and my big old gloves. I went in there, and when I left after my shift, I walked into the men's room, and all these guys were taking showers. They brought an extra set of clothes with them. I looked at it kind of weird, and I thought to myself, "Well, that is dumb. Why would you want to take a shower here when you can go home?" Then I looked in the mirror. I was covered with dirt from head to toe. The eight hours or nine hours of working in that filthy, dirty place of turning in bars of steel, grinding it up with dirt everywhere. It was absolutely, a steel mill is one of the most dirtiest places you could be. I looked in the mirror, and I mean, I was black from head to toe. My

clothes were covered with it, and I had never really looked at myself in eight hours, and I said, "Now I understand exactly why these guys take a shower."

Years later, I thought, "That is exactly the way we are with the world." We rub shoulders with the dirt of this world, just like in nine hours I rubbed shoulders with the dirt in a steel mill, and many times we really do not see how dirty it gets off on us. We do not see the dirt. We still think we are okay. I did, but I looked in the mirror, and when you look into the mirror, the Bible, you can see how the dirt of this world, through no fault of your own—I am not saying you are going out and looking for it. I was not going into the steel mill and it is getting dirt rubbing all my face because I can look like everybody else—through the natural course of my eight, nine hour shift, I just got dirt all over me. Through the natural course of you walking through life on planet earth, you are going to get dirt all over you. It just is. You are not going to stop it. These are the things that we are faced with.

In a world that we live in and a country we live in, every aspect of our lives is affected by it: your job, your family, your wife, your husband, your kids, your relationship, and all of that, your ministry, your church, your health, your well-being, your security, your future. When all the financial stuff turned down, there were people that had retired, that had a good pension. They had to go back to work. Why? Just like that. They lost \$200,000, \$300,000 in the stock market, and when they had a nice comfortable nest egg, then it was gone. That is the world that we live in. All of that is affected for you and for me by the powers that be. There is nothing that we can really do about it. Have you ever wanted to feel absolutely helpless? Just be in a situation where people in Washington are making decisions that are going to ruin your life? You have got no say on it. The only thing that keeps you sane, my friend, is getting an absolute in your life. Getting something that tells you why things are the way they are. It will better put you into a perspective, and oh, that is a great word, of where you are at and why you are at.

Then you take that concept and add to it the news media. They all have their own agenda. You and I are bombarded every day with all of the junk of the nations and the world events that just paint a terrible picture. It is incredible. How frustrating it is. Three quarters of the world today wants to kill us. They want to kill us so bad that a guy is willing to blow himself up on an airplane just to kill a bunch of us. If that was not enough, he puts the bomb in his shorts. 9/11. They took over a number of planes and committed suicide because they hated us and they wanted to kill us. Wherever you go. I have traveled around the world many, many times in my years, and I have been just about every place there is to go. I think of some of the places that I was, I would never think of going back now. I remember being in the Philippines and just starting out on my own and walking through the jungle to see the sights, so to speak. You do that today and you will wind up being somewhat terrorist prisoner, held ransom, and he gets your throat cut. It has all changed.

We spend billions and billions and billions of dollars on other countries in poverty, and yet you drive downtown and you find people that are homeless in this country living on the street when we will feed everybody else in the world but we will not take care of our own. What really bothers me is our veterans that are homeless. Oh, that just frosts me. Men who have spilt blood and served this country and they come back. When I hear stories like men who come back from

Iraq and they get a leg blown off or Afghanistan or they are severely hurt and they are in the hospital trying to recuperate, and then they have got to argue with their own government because of the fact the government wants them to prove they were really hurt in Afghanistan or Iraq, just stick the bloody stump up in their face and that ought to be proof enough. There was one situation where a young man had been stepped on a land mine, lost both of his legs, he is in the hospital and he is recovering very seriously and scrapping the hoods over. Our government sent him a bill for \$1600 for his helmet, his rifle, his body armor that never got turned back in. That is what happens when you get a bureaucracy running countries. I get frosted at things like that.

In your own town, you are basically held captive. In certain parts of town you drive down in, you have a chance of getting shot. You do not have to go looking for trouble. There have been stories of people just driving down the freeway and somebody fired a round in a car or over an overpass or somebody threw a rock down. There is no safe place in the world today. You say, "Well, I will go to work." Yeah. And somebody will be just running and walk in and shoot 15, 20 people. Police cannot protect you, but then our government wants to take the guns out of your hand so you cannot protect yourself. So when somebody breaks into your house, use harsh language.

Some of the things I used to like about when I used to get the National Rifleman, they used to have a section in there called "The Armed Citizen." I love the story that, and this is probably, remember the story just about a month and a half ago, that the woman that was alone out in the country and somebody pulled up at her house and somebody began to break in her house, and she got the sheriff's department. She went on the phone and she is trying to tell this woman that somebody is outside her house. She needs to get help, and they are talking with her and talking with her. She says, "Now he is on the back of my deal and I am alone by myself." She says, "I am going to go get my shotgun." The woman, the 911 operator, says, "You have a gun in the house?" She says, "Oh, I got a big one. I got a shotgun." She goes and gets, as soon as all in a 911, you could hear it. She went and got the shotgun, still did not want to shoot the guy. She is telling the 911 person, "Look, this guy, now he is picking up, he is looking in the window and he is picking up a chair and now he just smashed my window and he is coming in." She kept saying, "I do not want to shoot this guy. I do not want to kill anybody." Finally, and she is way out in the country. The average sheriff is over at the donut shop and he has got to make his way over there. She is in a body by herself. Finally an officer or a sheriff gets on the phone and he says, "Ma'am," he says, "if that man is in your house, you have a right to protect yourself and you have the authority to shoot him if he comes in that house." The next thing you heard was a shotgun going off and she killed the guy.

You know the greatest defense, and now let me say, I am not some white right-wing radical. I am not somebody out here that I am not part of the Missouri militia. I do not have anything to do with those kinds of things. But I just, all I have is common sense. Somebody says, "What is the greatest defense with a bad guy with a gun?" Seven good guys with guns. Somebody says, "Well, you know what, you should not have a gun because of the fact that innocent people will get killed." Oh, okay. Yeah, the guy with the bad guy comes in and kills nine or 10 or 15 innocent people, and you are afraid that some good guy with a gun might accidentally kill somebody. That is good thinking. It is crazy. It is crazy.

You do not pay your taxes, you go to jail. But if you are a senator or congressman and you do not pay yours, you get a free pass and then you get put in charge of the Internal Revenue Service. God, you have got to love it. I used to watch Porky Pig and Donald Duck on Saturday morning. I just watch CNN now. Congress wants you and I to have a universal health care, and they are working very hard at getting something ready, and they are going to shove it down our throat. But they themselves are not going to take the same health care. That is how it works.

The corruption and ungodliness in our own government rivals the famed Roman Empire right before its collapse. We live in a time, ladies and gentlemen, it is much like the time of the nation of Israel.

Isaiah 5:20

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Hosea 8:12

I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.

Mark 2:11 actually says that the men who have the lying false spirits that change all this good for evil, the Bible says that they will be the people's choice. The Bible is not silent on it. It gets real confusing. Now I am not saying you should not listen to all that stuff. I am not saying do not ever read a newspaper again. I am not ever saying do not listen to a news broadcast. I am just telling you in preparation for Romans chapter 13, I am preparing you, trying to lay the groundwork that in the times that we live in, if you do not have an absolute standard to sort it all out, you are going to be in trouble.

I tell people all the time, "You know what, you ought to in a wall and moan about life on planet earth and all those things." And I tell them, I say, "You know what, what are you complaining about? You got a front row seat to the end of the world. It did not cost you a dime." But we lose our perspectives.

IV. Deconstructing Misconceptions: Christian Nations and Church-State Separation

Somewhere in our thinking we got sidetracked. Let me tell you how we got sidetracked. I am going to show you how the Bible sorts it out for you. Somewhere along the line we think the Democrats and the liberals are of the devil, and the Republicans and the conservatives are of God. That is what it comes down to. I know why it happens, but here is what happens. The Democrats and the liberals are so bad. We hate everything they do. It is the ACLU that had, in all their tales, banning the prayer in schools and ACORN, and all that stuff, and the abortion issue of killing babies and all of those things and getting rid of God to the place. Every time somebody wants to do something for God, the ACLU stands up and takes them to court over the thing. We get so sick of that, and we hate that so desperately.

On the other hand, we see the Republicans and the conservatives, and they basically will stand, in most cases, for traditional values. At least you do not see them doing the godless stuff that the liberals do. They stand for some of your values, some of my values. First and Second Amendment rights. They are against abortion, as we are. So we automatically think, because we are just, this is the way we go, we automatically think that their way of government must be God's way. In our minds, we make the word "conservative" compatible with the word "Christian." We think they are the same.

Then you add to the confusion, you have all the great conservative preachers today and all the evangelical preachers today, they get into the side of it. I remember Jerry Falwell. Jerry Falwell is dead now, he went home to be with the Lord last year sometime. But who does not know about Jerry Falwell and his Moral Majority? Jerry Falwell wanted to change the government by getting to the point where he brought about a political organization that would rival the Democrats or the Republicans, or at least would be injected into the Republicans, that he would have such a forced base of people that the Republicans would always do Christian things. And it did not work. But even today, we have Dobson, we have Pat Robertson, we have Rick Warren and all those guys, and I am not saying they are bad guys. But when you put all that together, you begin to think that the Democrats are bad and of the devil and conservatives and Republicans are good.

Then you have on a global scale. On a global scale, it is really easy to see it. We are capitalists. We are under a capitalism, a system and structure. Within that capitalism system, we call it a democracy. In the world, global thing, it is capitalism versus communism. And now it is capitalism versus Mohammedism. But we have been bombarded all down through our lives. In the 1950s and the 1980s, we were afraid of the Cold War. That was with communists right after World War II. I remember, as clear as I am standing here, I remember back when I was, oh, what, six or seven years old, the threat of nuclear Russia going to bomb us. Then I got on, we did not have internet back then, but I read somewhere, my dad told me, that Canton, Ohio, is where I live. Canton, Ohio was the number two steel capital in the world back in the 50s. Republic Steel, Timken Roller Bearing, Bethlehem Steel, they made 90% of the steel for the world. So my dad comes home and boastfully talks about how the steel company in Canton, Ohio is the number one place in the world. Then he used to tell me that on the communist list, the ballistic destruction, Canton is number two. Well, that made me feel good. We are on their hit parade as number two.

I remember reading a Lifemagazine that everybody was worried about nuclear. Young guys, kids do not remember that. Some of you older ones probably remember it. I remember reading Lifemagazine, and it told you how to survive a nuclear attack from Russia. Now, keep in mind, I am just a little kid, but I can read. It says if you got, you can build a bomb, everybody was building bomb shelters, stocking them with food. You go downtown now, you will see some of those yellow and black signs that are showing up. There are civil defense signs, and they will talk about the capacity of how many are hold. That is a holdover from the fifties and the sixties in the Cold War. That was a bomb shelter. Back then they stocked them with food and water. I read in there, if you had an income of a year of a, you know, you could build a bomb shelter that, for \$100,000, you had a 99% chance of getting through a nuclear blast. If your income was

\$80,000 or \$70,000 or \$60,000, you could build a bomb shelter that gave you 85% chance. Then it said that if you had an income under \$20,000, which was ours, the best option was to go to the northeast corner of your basement. As a young kid, I spent a lot of time in the northeast corner of my basement. I was scared.

Then we moved from that into the Muslim era. And now we are all afraid of the terrorists. We had the war in Korea, then the war in Vietnam. Now we have the war in Iraq. Now we have the war in Afghanistan. America's goal has been very, they have been very prophetic and very popular with what their demands are. America wants to be the model nation to bring democracy, what we have, to all the repressive people in the world. So, that is our goal. So what do we do? So the CIA goes in and engages in co-op operations when there is a repressive government. We go in underneath the thing and topple the government like we did in Vietnam, like we did in Afghanistan when the Russians were there. We try to bring about these things.

Do you know why Osama bin Laden hates us so much? You say, "Well, he is a Muslim and he is a terror." Well, he is that. But do you know why he hates us so much? He has seen what our government has done underneath to undermine his own country through the CIA, because America wants to bring democracy to every nation. That is our crusade. We talk about people's civil rights. We talk about people's human rights. We get the impression from what we hear, what we read, and what we see about our government versus all the other governments, that we are the good guys and everybody else is the bad guys. We actually come away believing that because we hear civil rights, human rights, free the oppressed, we get the impression that God would have all men to be free in a democratic society or a capitalistic society like America.

Yet, ladies and gentlemen, you are going to see before we are finished this morning, that is simply not true. Real freedom does not come by getting somebody out of an oppressed nation. Real freedom comes by you getting your soul delivered by the death of Christ on Calvary's Cross. You can get somebody out of an oppressed nation all the way you want and give them a democracy when they get Elvis Presley's oldies and goodies for \$9.95 and eight-tracking cassette, give them hot dogs and all the things that go on, baseball and the bottom line. But at the end of the day, if they die and go to hell, you did not set anybody free. That is the first thing we need to understand this morning about approaching government. Real freedom is not you being in a government that lets you go wherever you want to go without having your papers are not in order. That is what we think.

The only right you and I have, the only right you and I have as a human being, the only right. There are no civil rights with God. There are no human rights with God. There is only freedom in Christ Jesus and his death on the cross. The only right you and I have today is to die and go to hell and scream our lungs out for all of eternity. That is man's right. Somebody says, "We want our rights." You go to hell if you got your rights. No, real freedom is never given to anybody by overthrowing some country or another government. Real freedom is getting somebody saved and getting them delivered from the bondage of sin and death and a direction headed to hell. And then they are free in Christ Jesus to do what God wants them to do. You need to understand that.

In Revelation chapter 3, verse 14, we find on our chart back there, we will go through it on church history, the last church period before Jesus Christ comes back, and we know that to be the Laodicean church period. And Laodicea means "rights of the people."

Revelation 3:14

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

The Bible is clearly telling us that the last church that is here in church history right before the coming of the Lord is going to be the church that concerns more about human rights, civil rights, their rights than God's rights. By the way, you realize that after you, before you are saved, the only rights you have is to die and go to hell. And after you get saved, you do not have any rights anyhow because the Bible says once you get saved, "You are not your own. You are bought with a price." You lose all your rights when you get saved. We do not like that because we have our rights. Yeah, you have your right. You got your rights today. You will be down there with a rich man in Luke chapter 16.

The reality of all this, and reality, my friend, is perception. It is found many places in the Bible. To me, the best place to start is in the book of Ecclesiastes. Do you know what the book of Ecclesiastes is about? We are going to learn a little bit about it, at least to help you better understand. We do not have time to go through it all this morning. But the book of Ecclesiastes is written by Solomon, who is the wisest man that ever lived. The theme of Ecclesiastes is one little phrase: "under the sun." You find that phrase 25 times in the book of Ecclesiastes. It simply means that Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, looks and investigates everything that goes on on planet earth that man can come up with, hence the term "under the sun." On planet earth, we live under the sun. What he does is he lists in the book, ten vanities that man has. The whole book is written from a completely different perspective than all the other books in the Bible. This is the only book in the Bible where Solomon, through God's Holy Spirit, dictates for us and shows us what really goes on, what is right, what is wrong, what is good, what is bad, under the sun on planet earth.

He goes through every "ology" that man comes up with. He goes through pragmatism. He goes through all the different things. He goes through hedonism. He goes through existentialism. He goes through pragmatism. He goes through everything that man comes up with as a philosophy for life and shows you how that it will not work. At the end of the day, it is vanity and it is going to land you in hell. He also goes through all the different governmental structures and systems because every government is built on a philosophy. I will give you a few of them to show you what I mean.

In Ecclesiastes 4:1, he shows you the evils of what we call fascism. Fascism would be Adolf Hitler. Fascism would be Mussolini. Fascism would be Tito in Spain during the early part of the 20th century. Then in Ecclesiastes 6:2, he goes through socialism. Socialism would also be connected with Marxism, communism, and he shows you how that is an evil. Then he goes in Ecclesiastes 9:7, he goes through modernism. Modernism would be a brand of liberalism where everything, we would call it situation ethics. "If it feels good, do it." That is modernism. Then he

talks about in Ecclesiastes 11:9-10, he talks about humanism. Humanism is man getting rid of God and man setting up himself as God.

You can combine some of these, and we talk about, you hear a lot about the progressive movement today. The progressive movement is a mixture of socialism, modernism, and humanism. When you blend them together, kind of like Neapolitan ice cream, you get the concept of progressivism. It has all the blends of it. But in Ecclesiastes 5:13, and this is what I want to get to, he shows you the evil of capitalism. Our form of government in the book of Ecclesiastes is not any better than the rest of them. The reality is that democracy and capitalism, Democrats and Republicans and progressives and independents, are no better from God's standpoint than communism, fascism, or the Mohammed crowd. It is all the same.

What you have got to begin to understand is that God's form of government is a theocracy. It is not a republic, it is not a democracy, it is not capitalism, it is God being on the throne. Right now, what you have got to realize, God is allowing the world to be run during this period of time right now. He is allowing it to be run by the devil.

2 Corinthians 4:4

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Right now, the devil is running the world through the nations, and he is running those nations through his religions. There is a time that Christ is going to come back and set up his kingdom, his theocracy. But right now, according to God's plan, God has to have it run the way it is. Now, you are going to see the answers to that here in just a little while, so listen to what I am saying, but pay attention.

If all this is true, and there is no doubt in my mind about it based on the Bible, it is true, here is what we need to understand, and here is what we are trying to get to. If everything I just told you is true, then what in the world is God doing in Romans chapter 13, telling you and me that we have to obey this unbiblical, vanity, godless system in a place in our country that is run by, now that we know the God of this world, what in the world is God doing in Romans chapter 13, telling us to obey it, saying that it is ordained of God, and that the people in power are put there by God, with all the corruption is going on and the fact that it is really run by the devil? That is the question, and that is really what you, this is what you have got to understand before we get into Romans chapter 13. All I am going to do today is I am going to help you. I am going to help you get your perspective. If you pay attention today, you are going to go out of here. If you just listen halfway, you are going to get some good background that is absolutely vital in putting this thing together.

V. God's Ordained Institutions and the Times of the Gentiles

Let me begin by saying this in the Bible. God only ordains three institutions, and this is very important. This is where we begin. Everything up to this point has been introduction. Very good introduction, but it has been introduction. God only ordains three institutions in the Bible.

3. The first one is marriage and the family, and you will find that in Genesis chapter 3, with Adam and Eve, and he ties it into Ephesians 5 for marriage for you and for me, and that is the model for every marriage.
4. The second thing that God ordains is the church, and the church is ordained as an institution in the book of Acts. So you have so far two institutions. You have the church and you have marriage, and of course, if you have been married any length of time, you fully understand that marriage is an institution. The moment you say, "I do," you have committed yourself to an institution. Now, whether it is a good institution or a bad institution, I cannot tell for you.
5. The third one is civil government. Civil government begins in Genesis chapter 10, 11, and 12, and the first Gentile nation is set up in Genesis chapter 10, which forms the first structure of government, and then it works its way all the way through the Bible, but it is realized in the model for you and for me, in the Nation of Israel in Exodus, the book of Exodus, 1 Samuel. The thing that you have got to realize is that all government is based on that model, or should be.

I do not know if you know this or not, and this will show you that our own country. Our country is a long way from what it was, and so therefore, because you do not have any history of it, or you do not have anybody to break it down for you from the Bible and give you what I am giving you, then all you have to hang on to is what you hear, and most of that is wrong. Our country, when it was formed in the early 1700s, was formed on the basis of the structure of God's institution of government, which was the Nation of Israel. Did you ever see it?

First of all, we were a republic, not a democracy. We have talked about this many, many times, and I will not go through it and tell you the difference between a republic and a democracy this morning, but basically, you know that a republic is built on the principles of the Word of God, and a democracy is built on the majority rules. The second thing that you find here is our own laws and our own statutes. In the Bible, you are going to find seven legal terms that are found in the Bible. Those seven legal terms found in the Bible, they form, basically, our legal system in the United States of America. In other words, when you go to court or you go into the law practice, you will find the seven legal terms in our own government setting up the laws and the statutes that you find in the Bible, because it is built on that concept.

Our own laws themselves. We have an issue today in our country about capital punishment, and we have a judicial system that deals out with the different aspects and crimes that people get into. But the truth of the matter is, many, many years ago, even in the early 1900s, our legal system was much more simplistic than it is today. It has gotten much complicated as anything big gets more complicated. But our basic laws themselves are founded on the Old Testament. When you want to talk about capital murder, you want to talk about manslaughter, you want to talk about accidental death. Our own government has different categories for that. You do not get the gas chamber, the electric chair, or lethal injection for manslaughter. You may go to jail for it, but you will not get executed for it. That is for capital murder. And yet, you will not go if you

accidentally kill somebody, and it was a terrible accident. They are not going to give you the death penalty for it. You may not even go to jail for it if it was just a situation that was an unavoidable accident. You say, "Who decides all of that?" That is based on Numbers chapter 35. Numbers chapter 35 tells you about a man who is a capital murder man, premeditated murder. It tells you about manslaughter. In the Bible, it is called manslaughter. It is called a slave. It talks to you about accidentally killing somebody. It even gives you an example: If you are out digging a hole or cutting down a tree, and your axe head comes off and kills the guy next to you. It covers all of those things. Our country, when it put up its judicial system, was based on the model found in the Bible.

You find people that do not want to go to war because they think the Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill." So if you go to war, you are killing somebody. But when you get into the Bible, you find that God does not call killing somebody in a war being a murderer. He does not look at it the same way. You have got to begin to understand those things. England is the same way. England, in its original concept, was probably closer to God's theocracy than even we were. Their parliament and their governmental structure is based basically on the same things. But they have a monarchy. They have a king or a queen. They are even closer to it than we are. We have a president. They have a king. They have that based on the fact that they understand what the Bible laid out.

Did you ever notice in England, when you go to parliament, you go to court, you always know they wear, even today, they wear the white powdered wigs? Do you know why they wear the white powdered wigs? Because in Revelation chapter 1, verse 14, when it gives a picture of the Lord Jesus coming back at the second coming of Christ, the Bible says, "His hair is white as wool."

Revelation 1:14

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

So they wear that as a symbol of the fact that their judgment of what they are going to do to remind them that there is one that is going to judge the world righteously so they better deal righteously with their judgment. Those things are, that is what those things are about. You could watch CNN a million years and nobody would ever tell you that. These are things you have to learn. We are in Romans chapter 13. We are going to talk about government and the shout of God. So you need to first understand that the model we have early on, even though it is gone to pieces today, was the model of the nation of Israel, God's third institute that He set up.

Now let me explain something to you. If there is anything that you are going to get confused on, if I am not careful, it will be what I am about to say. So I want you to listen very clearly. I want you to hear what I am saying. There is no such thing as a Christian nation. That is like saying there are Christian businesses. I remember years ago that Amway, and I am all for Amway. If you sell Amway, God bless you. "I am the way, the life, and the truth." I know what Jesus said. Amway. Now that I think of it, maybe it is a Christian business. Now that I will put it that way, I have heard all my life, and maybe you have too, that Amway is a Christian business. The truth of

the matter is there are no Christian businesses. Now let me clarify that. There may be Christians who run a business. But that does not make the business a Christian business. A country may be founded on biblical principles, and it may try to adhere to those biblical principles. But that does not mean that they are a Christian nation. It means they are a nation that follow to the best of their ability Christian principles. You have got to be very careful with that. Very, very careful with that.

The only thing that God ever set apart as Christian was the church. He did not ordain Christian governments. Now in the Old Testament, he had the nation of Israel that was a holy nation. But that is the difference between dealing with the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God. In the Old Testament, God had a holy visible nation, the nation of Israel. But they were not Christian because there were no Christians there. But they were holy and they were a nation. And God, through that nation, reached the world. But we know that today God has no Christian nation. He deals with it through you and me, the church. That is how he deals with it. It is just that simple. You have to understand that. If you are a Baptist here this morning, or I should say a Bible-believing Christian, you should be against, at least conceptually, in understanding the way I am laying it out, the idea of America being a Christian nation.

The reason why that is this: It is too close to the number one problem that America, when she began to build herself as a nation, tried to stay away from. And that is the concept of the separation of church and state. You do not want America to be a Christian nation anymore. You want America to be a Catholic nation. Or a Lutheran nation. Or a Presbyterian nation. Or an Episcopalian nation. You do not want any of those. You really do not, if you understand your Bible.

Now, I think the concept of separation of church and state is probably one of the most misunderstood concepts in all of America. It has absolutely nothing to do with you having prayer in school. Separation of church and state means absolutely nothing to a coach praying with his team before they play basketball or football. The separation of church and state has nothing to do with after school hours if you want to have a Christian club and meet in a school gymnasium and have a Bible study. It has absolutely nothing to do with at Christmas time, a church, or some public thing putting out a nativity display. It has absolutely nothing to do with the 10 commandments being displayed in your courthouse. It has absolutely nothing to do with Christmas pageants and Easter programs in your school. It has absolutely nothing to do with somebody going around saying, "Happy Christmas" and somebody else saying, "Happy Holidays." When I was in school, it was Christmas break. Now, you know what it is? The winter break. When I was in school, it was Easter break. You know what it is now? Spring break.

Let me tell you why you do not want the concept of a Christian nation. At least you want to define it in your mind so you understand how this thing fits in. Let me talk to you about separation of church and state from one. So you have got to have this. Now, where did it start? Well, it started in the early part of the 1800s. In 1801, there was a group called the Danbury Baptists. They were from Danbury, Connecticut. They had heard a rumor that America, which was just in its infant stage now, was going to put in a church-state religion. Now, you know what a church-state religion is, do not you? It means that a country decides on one religion. And that

religion becomes the state religion for the country. If you go to Spain, you do not grow up choosing being Catholic. You were born in Spain as a Catholic. You know why? Because Spain adopts the church-state religion of Catholicism as the national religion. So when you are born in Spain, you are born Catholic. In Germany, it is Lutheran. When you are born into a church in Germany, even to this day, and it is fragmented much because nobody believes in religion anymore, but for hundreds and hundreds of years, when you were born in Germany, you were born a Lutheran. And you did not have a say in it. That was the state church.

Now, this is why your founding fathers came from Europe to America, because they were trying to escape the one religion of any country, because they learned some things. They realized that in a country where it is true today, if you are in Spain and you are not a Roman Catholic, you know what you have to do if you go to be a missionary? You have to register with the state. When I say the state, I am not saying like Missouri, I am talking about the whole concept of the government. You have to register as a cult or a sect in that country, because you are not recognized as a religion. And you know what they do? Then they put five times the taxes on you and not on the church-state religion. They persecute you as much as they can. Many times, when the communism was rampant in Eastern Europe, in Hungary and places like that, in Czechoslovakia, which Czechoslovakia is no longer here, but in Romania, if you were a Bible-believing Baptist church, you had the church-state religion, was a religion that is set up by the communists, that they told you everything you could say and preach and do. And if you did not want to register with them, then you had to register as a cult and operate under some severe penalties. That is what they did not want. That is my point. You have got to understand what God is doing and what is going on.

The Danbury Baptists were concerned about that. They knew too well that every church-state religion that was set up wound up persecuting all the other religions. They wrote to, who then was president, Thomas Jefferson. They laid out their concern. He wrote them back on January 1, 1802. He told them not to worry. Now, here comes the definition of church and state from our own government. You never hear this today, but you are hearing it from me. He said not to worry that the First Amendment had put a wall between church and state. That is all you ever hear. They take it completely out of context. He was not saying that what he is talking about is one religion, whether it be the Catholics or the Lutherans or Baptists taking over the country. The reason why you do not want America being a Christian nation is because that is not by God's design. We do want America built and filled with people who love God and Biblical principles, but that does not make it a Christian nation. At the end of the day, it is still run by the God of this world. You have got to understand that.

So he says to them this. He said not to worry. The First Amendment had put a wall between the church and state. That is all you ever hear. But then he went on and he said this: "The First Amendment keeps the state from running the church, but does not keep Christian principles from running the government." That is what he said. That is exactly what we want. We do not want a Christian nation. We want a nation that is built on Christian principles because the only thing that God ever ordained to be the pinnacle of putting out Christianity is not a nation. It is the church,

you and me. That is exactly the way we want it to be. That is exactly what it needs to be. See how it works?

God will use all governments, good or bad, because God has a plan and he sets the governments up and he uses them and then he tears them down. Perspective is absolutely vital, absolute, getting the final authority. This is why in everything that we do, from Thursday night to Sunday morning to our one-on-one to whatever Bible Institute, church history, whatever we do, I am always showing you the biblical bottom line of what God is trying to do. I think so many of you got your eyes open when we went through our Bible basis class of how the whole Bible fits into the whole perspective of what God is doing.

American Christians never understand these aspects of God and nations, and so they get caught up with the internet, what they read, Fox News, NBC, ABC, CBS, 60 Minutes, Glenn Beck, Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity, Time, Newsweek, National Standard, and they totally lose God's viewpoint. I am not saying you should not listen to those guys, and I am not saying you should not read those things. I do, but I already have my perspective and I know nothing is going to change that.

Right now the Gentile nations are under the control of the God of this world. The Christian church is set up by Christ and God in this dispensation to carry out God's work within this satanic structure of any nation. The great thing that shows you that is, you ladies that went through the seven things that changed about you the day you got saved, I preached a series a number of years ago, it is on the website, and I showed you the two different things, the seven things that changed about you the day you got saved, and two of those things deal directly where we are at.

- The Bible says we are seated in heavenly places.
- The second one says that once we are saved, we are ambassadors for Christ.

You know what that means? That means when God, this is the answer to understanding the little phrase, "I am in this world but I am not of this world." God saved you. He could have taken you out and taken you to heaven just like that and let this whole thing just fold up, but God had a plan. The plan was the church, not the government, the church. So God puts you in a church. God saves you for a purpose. God serves you for a plan in your life. What He wants you to do is fulfill that through the church. So what He does, He gives you a Bible that gives you the perspective, He gives you a pastor that should give you the perspective, and you begin the process, but you begin to get in your mind that now that you are saved, you are not really here. You are up there. Set your affections on what? Things above. You are seated with Him. You are up there. Now the problem is you are up there in God's mind, but you are down here in your flesh, and we are rubbing up against all that dirty stuff. But in your perception, you are up here.

Then the other perception is I may be here, but I am an ambassador. You know what an ambassador is? We have ambassadors to every country in Washington, D.C. You know what their job is? Their job is to represent their government in a foreign government. You know what your job is? You are now citizens of heaven. Your citizenship is now in heaven. You are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. Your job and my job is to come back to this godless, worthless

piece of junk called America with a system and be God's ambassador. My duty today? You know what I am doing in this world? This world? I am in this world, but I am not of it. I am seated up there, but I am sent back as an ambassador to this nation. Yeah, I was born in America. I was born in Ohio. I have lived here all my life in this country. I have served in the military. I have done all the things everybody else does, but the day I got saved, I quit being seated here, and I am seated up there, and now my job has changed. Now I am a citizen of a foreign country, God's country. And now my job is to be an ambassador back to this world. My job is to tell everybody on this planet about a better place to live and a better government. See how it works? It is not hard. Just nobody ever explains it to you.

VI. God's Sovereignty Over Nations

There is a term in the Bible you need to understand, and I am quite aware that most of you understand this, but just be patient with me. It is found in Luke 21, verse 24, and it is simply the term "times of the Gentiles."

Luke 21:24

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Let me try to explain it to you. We know that in the Old Testament, most of the Old Testament up to 2 Chronicles chapter 36, you could start at the beginning of your Bible in Genesis and go all the way up in right order to 2 Chronicles chapter 36, and you would find that in Acts's story in the Old Testament, that covers God's establishment of the nation of Israel. You know how that thing goes. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, right down the line. In 1 Samuel, they become a nation. God got about an Exodus, brings them in. They give them a King David, and they reign for four or five hundred years, and then what happens? They go to pot. Baal comes in. Baal worship comes in. All the other gods come in, and they go belly up.

In 606 B.C., in your Bible, that will be 2 Chronicles chapter 36. In your Bible in history, that will be 606 B.C. God was fed up with the nation of Israel. So from 606 B.C., all the way up through history, we are now living, 2010? Okay, from 606 B.C., that is when the times of the Gentiles start. The times of the Gentiles start when God is finished with the nation of Israel temporarily, Romans chapter 9, 10, 11, and then turns his attention to the Gentile world and nations. That period runs from 606 B.C. right up now in the time that we are living, and runs right up to Christ comes back at the second coming of Christ. We are living in, and have been living in, since 606 B.C., times of the Gentiles. Why does it call it times of the Gentiles? Because it is the time on planet earth when the world is run by Gentile nations. And we know who runs those Gentile nations now, do not we? The God of this world. See how it works? That is exactly what you have got to understand and you have got to deal with. At a time that the Gentiles is a period of time when God turns world domination from God and Israel to the devil and the Gentile nations. This is exactly what you have got to begin to understand.

Now, this brings us up to the book of Daniel. The book of Daniel is an incredible book. Everybody likes Daniel because it talks about prophecy. Daniel's 70th week, ties into the book of

Revelation, and it all does. But let me tell you one of the things that Daniel does for you that most people never see. Daniel is a book that is written by the man Daniel in your Bible who goes into captivity in 606 BC under Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Do you know what Daniel does? Yeah, he writes the great prophetic book about the Second Coming of Christ, but I will tell you what he also does. Daniel lists the Gentile nations in the order that they appear from 606 BC right up to the time that we are living right now. What you get when you understand that is you begin to see and understand the concept of the times of the Gentiles and how it fits into Romans chapter 13 of us being in America, and it helps figure out why all of this stuff is going on around us today. Let me bring you through it very quickly.

In Daniel chapter 2, he starts with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. That will be 606 BC. The next king that comes on the scene in 536 will be Darius, who is king of Persia. The next king that comes on will be in 330 BC, and that will be Alexander the Great and that will be the Greek. Last night if you were just sitting around bebopping, not paying any attention, there was a movie on called Troy. Most people do not know how much Achilles impacted the world. If you got, he got shot in the heel back here, and to this day they call it the Achilles tendon. That is Alexander the Great. Greek takes over and defeats Persia. That is what it was all about last night if you watched that movie. Then in Greek, in 100 BC, Greece gets defeated by Rome. And then Rome stays into power from 100 BC up to about 1500 AD.

Then we switch to Daniel chapter 7 and we pick up the last three nations that puts it all in perspective. In the Reformation in 1500, England takes over from Rome and England becomes the world power for the next 400 years. In 1900, she changes power. We have the Bolshevik Revolution and Russia becomes the world power in 1917, and she rules the world up to about 1980 when the wall collapsed and communism lost every nation just about that she had in Central Europe and they were suddenly free. Then you know who takes it over in Daniel chapter 7? The good old USA, America, from 1980 up to right now the time period we are living in. When you study that thing, you know who comes in right after the USA and the last world power? The Antichrist. The whole thing works, everything in history, every nation, every king, every president, every, every, everything will work toward one end and that end is Christ coming back.

Our problem is that old saying that we have heard about many, many times, and some of you young kids do not use it anymore but us older folks, remember the old saying, "We cannot see the forest for the trees?" Well, this is our problem in America. We cannot see what is going around because we are too close to it. You know one of the great concepts I love in the Bible? It is the concept of a high tower. David has a high tower and a high tower set on the wall back in the Old Testament. When you set on the wall, you can look out and get a 360 perspective of what is going on around you. Ground level, you could not see only one perspective, but when you get up high on a tower, you have got a 360 perspective of what is going on around you. Of course, that is what the Bible does for you. The Bible elevates you to the place that you have a high tower, you and God, and what God shows you from that high tower is a 360 perspective of what is going on around you. You get up above the trees, because down here we are too close to the trees. You have got to get up.

I remember one time years ago when I was just a teenager, I had an uncle. His name was Uncle Ernest. Uncle Ernest was a forest warden or a game warden or something. I do not know what he did. But his wife was one of those forest service people back in Maryland. He had these beautiful forests and she was up in a tower. Her job was to look for forest fires. Her whole job all day was to stand up there and look through binoculars and see smoke and call it in and all those things. One day, we were driving through the thing. They were going to take me up there. I was just a young kid and I come through there and I thought, "Man, the trees were all in there." But when he got up the little gravel road to the tower and we walked up that ladder, oh, it was scary, it was like back then it was a thousand feet, probably 50 feet off the ground. And I go up on top of that thing and she got up there and I could see the hay. It was just like the whole thing changed. I could look now a panoramic view in 360 degrees and see nothing but the tops of trees and anything that went on, you could see from up there. Big old powerful binoculars, man. And I thought to myself years later, I thought, "You know what, that is what the Bible does for you." Because driving up the road of life, sometimes you just see the trees around you. But when you get up to that tower, that tower is based on learning the principles and getting your perception of the Bible. What I am trying to give you today, it elevates you to the point that you begin to see things that you cannot see when you are just down here. That is our problem. That is our problem.

VII. God's Sovereignty Over Nations

I want to give you two verses here that are going to really help you put this all together. The first one is Proverbs chapter 21, verse 1, and it says this, and you have got to get this. This is the piece of the puzzle you need to have.

Proverbs 21:1

The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

It says no matter what government, what king, what prince, what president, whatever, the heart of that man is in God's hand. And God uses nations to accomplish his plan, whether they are good or whether they are bad. You have got to see that.

Then the second thing I want you to see is found in Psalm chapter 9, verse 17.

Psalm 9:17

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

You see, God judges nations, and most people do not know this, God judges nations just like he judges individuals. God has a plan and he uses nations and countries and kings and presidents and queens to accomplish that plan, good or bad. And then when he is done with them, he sends the nations on the ash heap of history, and if the people did not do what was right, they wind up and go to hell.

Watch how this thing works. In Genesis chapter 12, God used Pharaoh to get Abraham back on track. Pharaoh was an unsaved, pagan man who had no concept of God or cared anything about Abraham, but God used him. In Genesis chapter 20, God used Abimelech to get Abraham back on track. At the end of Genesis, in the early part of Exodus, what did he do? He used his Pharaoh in Egypt to build his people, the nation of Israel, into a fighting, strong nation. How did he do it? He made slaves out of them for 430 years. Violated their human rights and their civil rights. For 430 years, he stuck them down in Egypt, the most godless, perverted place on this planet. For 430 years, he said to Pharaoh, "Make them strong for me." And they come out of Exodus chapter 12, 430 years later, and they are God's people. Then you know what God did? He came down and clobbered Egypt, buried them in the litter box of the Middle East, and you cannot even find them today. When you study Egyptian history, you study it in three phases, early, middle, and late dynasties. You go to an Egyptologist today or somebody that is an archeologist today in Egypt, he could not tell you anything about the beginning of those kingdoms in the early and even sometimes in the middle. They do not know who built the pyramids. They do not know who built the sphinx. They do not know who built any of that stuff. You know why? Because God used them for his purpose to make his nation a strong nation and then flushed them. Why? Because God uses nations. You have got to learn this.

How about the book of Judges? In the book of Judges, he used nations. In fact, in Judges chapter 3, verse 1, he says he left these nations for one reason. These godless, perverted, they hated God, they hated everything about God, and they hated the nation of Israel. God says, he tells you, "I left them here for one reason. They are going to prove the nation of Israel." You know who they are? They are telling the most godless nations in the Old Testament, the Canaanites, the Jebusites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Philistines, the Hivites, the Moabites, they are all against God. You know what God does? God uses every one of those nations in the book of Judges to prove Israel. You know what he does? He wipes them out and never says, "Thank you." Kills them. You cannot even find them today. Get out of Matt, go to the Middle East, show me the Hittites, show me the Canaanites, show me the Jebusites. They are gone.

He sets up Israel for 2 Samuel, for 2 Kings. He gives them the greatest nation on the face of this planet, and you know what happens? They fail, fall flat on their face. 500 years later, they are in the Baal worship. He gets fed up with them. He temporarily takes them out of Jerusalem, sends them into captivity. He gets on the big red phone that God has got up there, and he calls two kings. One in the south, Nebuchadnezzar, and one up north, King of Syria, Sennacherib. And he says, "Look, guys, I got a job for you. My people, who I put down there and did everything for, have just turned their back on me. Now I need to whip them. So what I want you to do, Nebuchadnezzar, I want you to go in and take the two Southern tribes, and Sennacherib, I want you to get on the clobber to 10 Northern tribes, and take them into captivity. Whip them good for me. Kill about half of them, take the rest of them into captivity, and get them down there and whip them. Because I am their God, I told them this was going to happen. They said, 'No big deal.' And they turned their back on me, go get them." Boy, did he go get them. When Sennacherib came down from the north, he butchered them. When Nebuchadnezzar came in from the south, he butchered them. And he took them into captivity and temporarily, because of

their turning their back on God, the nation of Israel ceased to exist, and the kingdom of heaven temporarily is gone.

You know what he did? He called Darius, King of Persia, and said, "Now I got a job for you. Go kick the fire out of Babylon and Syria." And Persia did, with Darius and Cyrus. Then you know what he says to a wicked king. Now Darius was not a Christian guy. He was a pagan king, just like the other guys. So you know what that did then? He called Darius on the phone, and he said, "You know what? They have been in captivity long enough. Go down there and whip Babylon, and go down there and kick the fire out of Assyria." And he did. And then he says, "You got control of the world now? You are the nation of domination? Gentile nation, because we are in a time of the nation. Now here is what I want you to do. Send some of them back to Jerusalem." "Yes, sir." "Oh, and by the way, there is going to be some people down there that do not want them back, so send an army down to protect them." "Yes, sir." So the same God who used the nation to whip them and destroy them was the same God that took the next nation, whipped those nations, and then sent his people back. And again, never said, "Thank you." No, you know what he did? When he was done with Persia, he threw them on the ash heap of history.

The nations of this government, of this world, are established by God for his work, for his purpose, and his pleasure. Never mind CBS, NBC, and Fox News. Do not get caught up with the Republicans and the Democrats and the communists and the capitalists and all that. God uses those nations to fulfill his plan. The Bible told you in Romans chapter 9, verse 17, that as far as nations are concerned, God had vessels of honor, and he had vessels of dishonor. You get to choose which way you want to go. God will look at a nation, and he says, "You follow my principles, and I will take you and use you, and I will bless you. You want to go your way and tell me to take a walk? Go ahead. I will still use you, and then I will use you, and then I will throw you on the ash heap, and I will judge you and send you to hell at the end of the Great White Throne Judgment."

What did he say to Pharaoh, Romans chapter 9, verse 17? Pharaoh, the wicked Egyptian king. Watch what he said.

Romans 9:17

For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

You know what he did? He brought Pharaoh up, made him make Israel a great people, and then he comes down and he clobbers down, and he says, "You know what?" Hey, Pharaoh had every chance that you and I have. How many times did Moses go to him and say, "Let my people go?" He says, "I ain't letting your people go." "They are my people," Moses said. "God wants them to be his people." "I do not care about your God. I am your old printer, man. I have been making movies." So what happened? God finally got his people out, did not he? And then Pharaoh comes after him, does not he? Like, "Oh, God does not have a plan. What do we do now?" I mean, they are standing there inside the Red Sea. God had just split the Red Sea, and they are standing over there, and they see Pharaoh's army is coming after him. They are saying, "Oh, God," they lose faith, just like we do. You know why? They kept losing their perspective. Forget the fact that

God just got him out of a slavery for 400 years through miraculous stuff, and here you are over here now on the other side. He just split the Red Sea, and I am worried about an army coming after me, but oh, they were. God says, "Moses, just hang on." God says, "Moses, just hang on. You have got to get them in the middle there. Just let them get down in the middle." When they got down in the middle of that big old thing, man, they just said, "Hey, boys, put the water back." They all drowned.

Now, you know what your liberals tell you, do not you? They will try to take everything away from you. They will say, "Well, they really did not drown in the Red Sea. Well, that is just a fable." So when you go to most churches, or you go to seminary, or you talk to most people, they will say, "It was not the Sea of Red Sea. It was the Sea of Reeds." They just left a little "e" out. It was no real miracle. Well, I think that is quite a miracle. They said, "The Sea of Reeds only had about four inches of water in it." I think that is quite a miracle. Paul Pharaoh's army drowned in four inches of water. I like that better than the other one. I think that is pretty good. Either way you go, you cannot get around God. He uses nations. He just uses nations.

VIII. America's Role in God's Plan and the Ambassadorial Mandate

America, my friend, you want the real truth? I mean, I sound like Jack Nicholson up here. "You want the truth? You cannot handle the truth." That was in *A Few Good Men*, by the way, if you never saw that movie. America is the final phase of God's plan, folks. Daniel chapter 2, Daniel chapter 7, leads to the Antichrist. We are the last great Gentile world power. God will use her for his pleasure, for his purpose, and while the governments of the world and the government of America scramble to fix all their problems, just like ants on an anthill, they will never figure it out.

When I was a kid, the greatest gift I ever got, they do not have these anymore. Of course, this is our government putting restrictions on it. They all have got to have visas. I had an ant farm. How many know what an ant farm is? You used to buy them. You would get a little, it was a little box about that big, and it had dirt in it, and then you got a bag of ants, add water, they come back alive, and you put them in there, and they had a big glass front. You could actually watch the ants making little tunnels, laying little eggs, doing all those little ant things, and it was a great little tool as a kid. I had that for about four or five years. Then those ants, they built this, and they grew, and I would catch ants in the backyard and put them in, to keep them re-going, because ants die, they get old too. They had a little thing down here. I think that was the ants' old folks' home, but they had a little society built down there. I got that when I was probably nine. Then four or five years later, I found out better than ants were the thing called girls. And the ant farm, I lost interest in. You know what I did one day? After my mom just nailing me for a month, you know what I did? I walked into that bedroom where I had my ant farm. I walked over to the table, picked up that ant farm, and put that thing over there, went to the trash, just threw that thing in the trash.

Now, those ants did not appreciate that. They had built their world as they knew it in that ant farm. The only problem was they never realized that somebody else had bought and paid for the ant farm, and it really belonged to me. They just thought it was theirs. And one of these days, ladies and gentlemen, the one who built this ant farm, whose ant farm it really is, is going to come back and throw the whole thing in the trash. What you think about it and I think about it makes as much sense as those ants thought about it when I found out there were girls in the world. He built the ant farm. It is his. Because we scurry around here like ants making all these decisions, doing all these things, does not change the fact that it is his world, his ant farm, and when he comes back and says it is over, it is over. Then he will throw her on the trash pile of history with all the other nations that have forgotten God.

Look how it goes. God used America to give freedom to the early Bible believers in 1600, did not he? God used her to get you the right Bible in 1600 to 1800. God used America to get you the right church in 1600 to 1800. God used this country to get the book to the world in 1700 to 1800 to 1900. God used this country to get the Jew back in the land in 1948. God used this country to protect her national policy by giving her F-15s and A-bombs and arms and ammo and money and all those things. Then he will turn around and use this country after she dumps the book to bring in the Antichrist, which is happening right now, and set this whole thing up because God uses nations.

You see, you have got to have perspective. I am in this world, but I am not of this world. I am an ambassador. I love my country. I have no real feelings to more of my country. I really do not. I understand what this country is. Right now, Romans chapter 13 has to be viewed in the light of this right perspective. Nothing that this country does will stop the work of God or you doing it as long as you keep your perspective. You see, people forget the greatest nation that God has used in the 20th century to work in the 20th century to do his work with a nation that had their freedoms taken away from them. Not America. Red China. Korea. Romania. Hungary. Cuba. The Bible going on down through those countries while you and I enjoyed our freedom wanting to free the oppressed of those repressive nations. Do not you know that Christianity always flourishes best when it is persecuted for what they believe? Here is God put the whole structure up to get thousands of hundreds of millions of people saved, and he knows that persecution is the way to do it, and our country is trying to undo the persecution that God put them in so we can really free them. You have got to get your perspective. You have got to get your perspective. You have got to get your perspective.

I am telling you, this is why you and I need to come to the place that when we get into Romans chapter 13 and we start looking at the government, we need to understand it in its perspective of what it is. Now you have got all the tools now, all the tools that you need to put it in the right concept, the right perspective to do something with it in your own personal life. As we enter Romans chapter 13, now we have the tools to understand it the right way. Everything you needed you got today, and if you are somebody that is trying to put your Bible together and learn all the concepts of things, you got a valuable lesson this morning. Maybe the rest of you will not make any difference, but if you are trying to put it all together, you got what you needed today.