

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Governing Public Freedom

God's government of our freedom

- *Personal, Corporate & Civic*

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Coming to the third God ordained government of our freedom; Civic...

- *They each occur in order of priority*
- *Each is then established on those before...*
- *Never at the expense of the former*

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God grants us the freedom to govern our own life

- *And we are responsible for how we do it...*
- *Our convictions provide the definitions we subscribe to.*
- *Without governing definitions, we drift in confusion*

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The Holy Spirit convinces us of sin, righteousness & judgement

- *What is **wrong**, what is **right** & the **consequence** of both*
- *Those convictions will serve us best and keep us safe*

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Our own life is the only one we have absolute governing authority over

- *God has given **three love commands** to govern our own lives with:*
- ***Matthew 22:37-40 & John 13:34***

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*The first of all is to love **who God is...***

- *With all we **are**, all we **have** & all we **are capable of***

The second expands & multiplies it to everyone else

- *These two fulfill the law & the prophets*
- ***Matthew 5:17 & 22:37-40***

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*The third empowers us to **be who Jesus is** together*

- ***John 13:34 & 1 John 4:17***
- *And graduates us to our **corporate** government of freedom*

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Governing our corporate freedom is like the first...

- *But requires cooperation and **mutual submission** to God & each other*
- *We cannot have this without each other*

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***1 Peter 5:5**, Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*

- *It is voluntary & cannot be imposed on anyone*
- *We are each other's safeguard against sin (**1 Cor. 5**)*

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***Proverbs 18:1** reveals that separated individuality fuels selfishness*

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***Philippians 2:1-5**, Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but **in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself**. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for*

the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus

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*God's realm of governed corporate freedom is **the most powerful of all***

- ***I John 4:17**, Love has been perfected **among us** in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because **as He is, so are we** in this world.*

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***John 13:34-35**, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; **as I have loved you**, that you also love one another. By this **all will know that you are My disciples**, if you have love for one another."*

- *It empowers us to **change lives** & change our world*
- *Conformity to civil government standards cannot do that*

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The third government of freedom is Civic

- ***It is the least important of the three...***
- *In both likelihood and impact*

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*The first two define & govern **who we are**, individually & together...*

- *By definitions we all agree on & commit to*
- *The third only defines & governs **our conduct***

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We can conduct ourselves well, and still be lost without God

- *Being a good person is often **the deception** that keeps people from God*
- *Some Christians mistakenly entrust themselves to civic government more than the church*

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***I Corinthians 6:1-7**, Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if*

the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then you have disputes concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers! Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? (*My car*)

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***John 18:33-38**, Then Pilate called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "**My kingdom is not of this world**. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight... You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world"*

Pilate went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all."

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God has provided for government over society, the godly and ungodly alike.

- *How is civil government supposed to serve our freedom?*
- *And what is our relationship to it supposed to be?*

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***Romans 13:1-7**, Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what*

is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, **not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake**. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

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Civil government is ordained by God to protect peaceful citizens and punish those who would inflict evil on them.

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Not all civil government will be good, or godly. Most won't.

- *Paul wrote this under the authority of the Roman ruler Nero.*
- *Roman civil authority also protected him from being murdered by the Jews in Jerusalem.*

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Peter affirms the same things Paul did

- *Both of them were executed by godless civil government*
- ***That doesn't change who we are, or why***

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I Peter 2:13-17, Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. **For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— as free**, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Submission to civil government never authorizes us to sin...

- *Or to violate the shared government of His church*
- *Keep that in mind as government in the U.S. rotates from one administration to another.*