

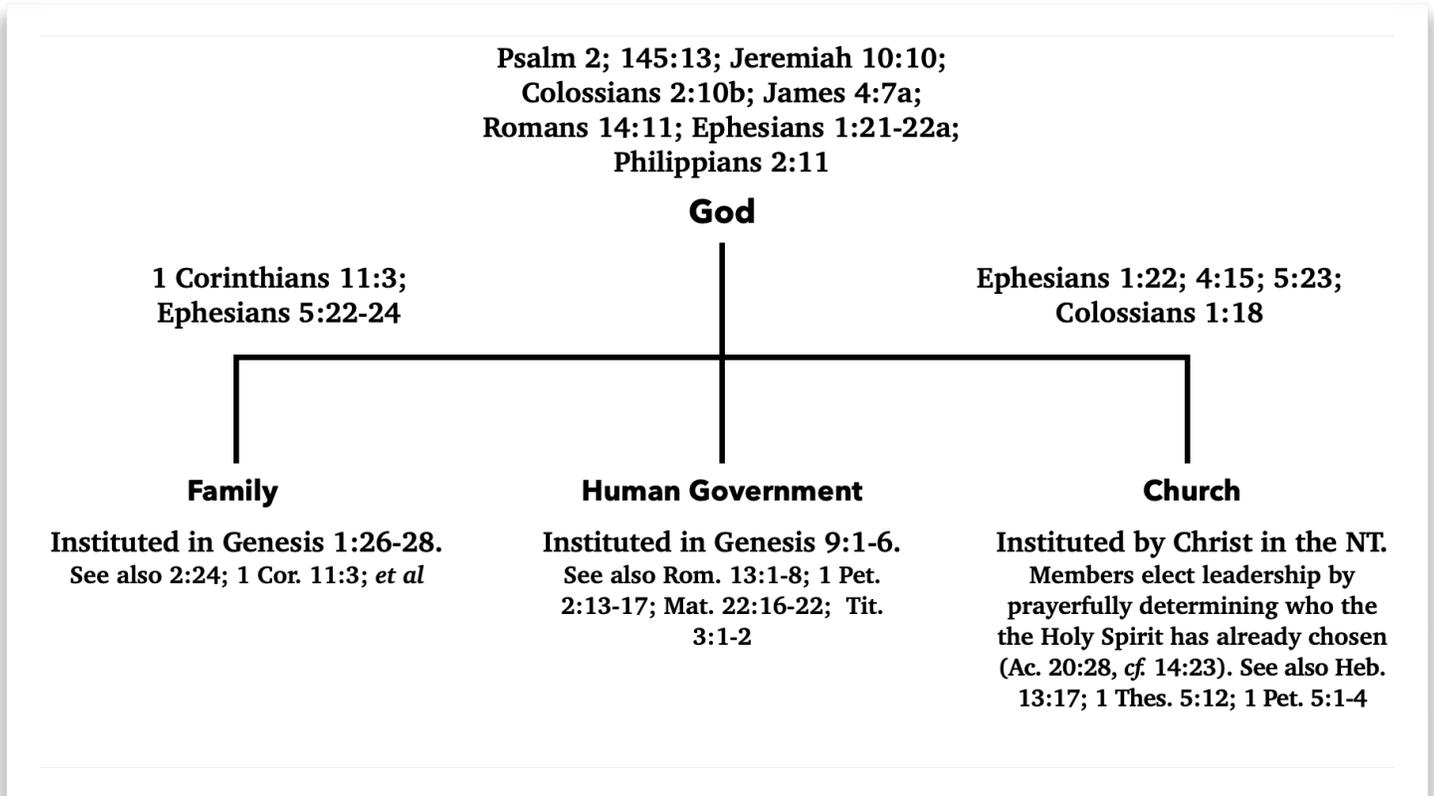
God's Authority Structure

by Pastor David Harness, Jr.

Introduction

Preached @ VBC on 2020-10-14

I. The Highest Authority: _____



A. God is the Supreme Authority

1. He is _____ above All (Psalm 2; 145:13; Daniel 4:34-35; Jeremiah 10:10; Colossians 2:10b; Ephesians 1:21-22a)
2. Every Knee Shall Bow, Every Tongue Shall Confess That Jesus Christ Is Lord (Philippians 2:11)

B. "Submit yourselves therefore to God." (James 4:7b)

II. God-ordained Authority Structures

A. _____

1. Instituted in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:)
2. Structure:
 - a) _____ is the head of the wife;
 - b) wife is submit to headship of husband;
 - c) children are to obey their parents.

God's Authority Structure

by Pastor David Harness, Jr.

3. Responsibilities:
 - a) The husband is to love his wife and lead his family.
 - b) The wife is to _____ to her husband's leadership and reverence him.
 - c) Children are to honour and _____ their parents.

B. Human Government (Romans 13:1-7)

1. Instituted after the _____ (Genesis 9:6)

Human government was inaugurated by God after the flood when He placed into Noah's hand the sword of the magistrate. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Gen. 9:6) were the words which launched man on the road to self-government under God. The highest function of government is the judicial taking of life...¹

2. Structure:
 - There are many types of governments; their God-given right to rule and responsibilities to their citizens do not change.
3. Responsibilities:
 - a) Responsible for National Safety
 - (1) Protect the _____
 - (a) Resist outlawed members of the community
 - (b) Recognize outstanding members of the community (13:3b-4a)
 - (2) Punish the _____ (13:4b-5)

In Paul's day provincial Roman magistrates wore a sword. This sword was borne before the magistrate in public processions as a symbol of his right to punish by death. It is said that the emperor Trajan once presented a sword to a provincial governor as he started for his sphere of service. On the sword were engraven the words: "For *me*. If I deserve it, *in me*."²

- b) Responsible for National Solvency (13:6)
4. Rights of National Leaders (13:7):
 - a) Monetary Support
 - See also Matt. 17:24-27; 22:16-22
 - b) Moral Support

C. _____

1. Instituted after the Resurrection
2. Structure:
 - a) _____ is the head
 - (1) He is the Chief Shepherd

¹ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, John Phillips Commentary Series. Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1969), 212-213.

² John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, John Phillips Commentary Series. Accordance electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1969), 220.

God's Authority Structure

by Pastor David Harness, Jr.

(2) He is the Head Bishop

b) Baptists have historically practiced _____ rule, under the leadership of a bishop and/or pastors and elders.

(1) The congregation elects its leadership by prayerfully ordaining (Acts 14:23) and voluntarily submitting to the men whom the Holy Spirit has already chosen.

- Paul instructed the Ephesian elders assembled at Miletus to:

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

(2) The congregation is exhorted to:

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” (Hebrews 13:17)

and:

...to know them which labour among you, and are over you (Greek προϊστημι *proistēmi* = set over, appointed with authority) in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11–13)

c) The elders/pastors/bishops are under the authority of the Chief Shepherd and Bishop and accountable to _____. They are responsible to:

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. (1 Peter 5:1-4)

d) All members are to be _____ one to another

Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:1–5)

D. All Three Authority Structures are:

1. Separate from each other;
2. Limited in their _____ and _____;
3. Run concurrently.
4. Examples of interference between the three separate spheres of authority:
 - a) A state church, or government-mandated or controlled religion.
 - b) A government changing the definition of marriage or the family.
 - c) A government usurping the parents responsibility to educate their children.
 - d) A government mandating healthcare or medicine—God has not given governments authority in health matters.

God's Authority Structure

by Pastor David Harness, Jr.

III. The Christian's Relationship and Response to Government

A. Recognize that rulers – even a corrupt and/or unjust government – are _____ by God.

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance [institution] of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.” (1 Peter 2:13–17)

B. Government is to be subject to God (but not to the church)

C. We are not called upon to obey laws that violate morality or our obedience to God (Acts 5:29)

D. Do not despise government

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.” (Titus 3:1–2)

1. Don't be rebellious

2. Don't be unloving

E. Pray for government

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:1–4)

Conclusion