

Economics 101

We are presently in an economic crisis in America and our leaders are seeking to resolve it before it affects our lives and lifestyle. Some of their proposals are not good for a free market (the engine that drives our economy). Too much control restrains freedom in any situation, but restraints are also necessary to achieve, preserve, and secure certain objectives. The question is, "How much is too much?"

This has been the question for humanity since the beginning. Man has a free will to exercise in accordance to life's needs if he is to live on planet earth. But this same freedom allows him to act in any way he pleases – even to the point of destruction of life. Food, clothing, and shelter are the necessities of human life. They are provided by parents to their offspring until they are capable of life on their own. Community life also becomes necessary for survival, requiring people to work together for the common good. Children must obey and learn how to be assets for family life if they are allowed to live in community life. If they are destructive to family life, they will, likewise, be harmful to community life. If they do not control themselves, then restraints are necessary to control them by others.

Children are taught the knowledge of what is good, as well as the knowledge of what is harmful. They must learn and act accordingly in order to sustain life for themselves and others. If they act to harm and hurt, they must be restrained; the same is true for citizens. Community life requires working together for the common good, much like a beehive or an anthill. The question is how can we get *free will* people to harmonize and work together? Any restraint from others interferes with the freedom of the will. Herein lies the human dilemma.

Dilemma and Crisis

Dilemma indicates a situation that requires a choice between equally unfavorable options. In other words, any action will have ill effects. If you restrain activity, you restrain free will. If you do not restrain free will when it acts to do harm, it may be destructive to self and to others – even the entire community. If you restrain free will, you interfere with human nature – the freedom to act that is given by God (naturally) to man. Restraint can be so extreme it can make a soul a slave or a robot. How much is too much? What must be done to control a rebel? How can a human soul be controlled without taking away his God-given rights?

The Fathers of the American Republic justified their rebellion to the British crown on the concept that too much control results in the loss of God-given rights. The dilemma for the British crown was that too much force could result in revolution and bloodshed, while too little could result in loss of

revenue for the crown. The dilemma for the colonies was that while rebellion would result in bloodshed, subjection would result in the bondage of the will, thus making them slaves to the will of the crown. The colonists had been sent and sponsored by the crown. They needed the help of the crown as their sponsor, much like a child needs parents. But the colonists had reached the point, of being established in the land and could sustain life on their own. They wanted to be free and independent states, capable of doing what states do – that is, make treaties, declare war, secure citizens, etc. They wanted permission from the crown for statehood. They even appealed to Parliament, but in vain.

The American Revolution could be likened to thirteen children brought into the world by a father who provided the necessities of life, and trained them to be capable of life without him, then would not set them free to be fathers themselves, with families of their own. This would take away the birthright of nature and of God.

Sometimes children want to be on their own before they are capable; likewise, sometimes colonies have rebelled, only to discover they could not make it on their own. Imagine thirteen sons declaring their independence from a father who uses force to keep them in subjection to him. Imagine the bloodshed that results when the father refuses to give the sons what is, by nature, theirs. This is what Jesus meant when He told the Jewish nation that His Father would not give them the New Kingdom of Messiah, because they were not good stewards of the old kingdom of Moses that had belonged to their fathers.

Involuntary Control

History helps us to understand this dilemma. Rulers must have obedience if their kingdom is to prosper. We see this all the way back to the days of the Bible. Pharaoh needed slaves then just as the world needs oil now. Involuntary service was better than no service at all to Pharaoh. But God will only accept voluntary service. God could be a sovereign ruler without any disobedience if He would use fear and force, but God desires free will submission only. Our government, likewise, desires freedom in the marketplace, but economic failure can threaten national security. This gives the government the right and responsibility to act. But how can the government control a free market with legal requirements without taking away freedom?

This is a problem as old as mankind – man must comply with rules for the common good of the family, the tribe, the nation, the empire and now, due to globalization, of the whole world. Recession in America means recession in all the nations that depend on trade with her. The Magna Charter in 1215 questioned the power of a king, as did the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The governor of the Mayflower Compact had to control what people planted in 1620 to insure a food supply for survival.

When people are free to act in their own self-interest, the community may perish. When nations act in their own self-interest, the world may perish.

Our 21st century world consists of some 200 nations seeking an adequate economy for physical life in a physical kingdom for its citizens. Ever since the flood changed the creation with its abundance, man has been in competition for the necessities of earthly life (food, clothing and shelter). Ever since language divided man into tongues, tribes, and nations, the basis of competition has been race, religion, and ethnicity; i.e., our God can whip your God. People tend to think "Our race is superior...our God provides for us...our culture is more productive, etc." How does a family, tribe, or national kingdom harmonize activity for the common (economic) good without violating the free will activity of individuals?

Free will activity is what the Bible calls faith. A soul may believe and act according to its own pleasure. It may obey or disobey. It may act for good or evil (harm) for itself or others. Faith requires knowledge in order to believe, and wisdom in order to act. Faith can be deceived by good or by evil. Faith may believe that it acts for good, but it may result in evil.

Man is born in crisis – confronted with both life and death. He must know what to believe, who to trust, and how to act. The Bible gives us a history of faith as related to individuals, families, tribes, nations, and world empires.

Living by Faith

Animals live by instinct, but man lives by faith. We think of faith only in relation to religion, but it is nature's gift to man for life on earth. Man must know how to live and what to do in order to survive and prosper in life. He must have food, clothing, and shelter, which he must secure against loss to the elements of nature or those who would take them away. This gave rise to religion, because man needed a higher power – a God of nature or a God of war, etc.

Poly-gods and poly-faiths abounded in the days of Abraham, when one God appeared with the claim of monotheism, as well as one faith for Abraham and his children. This is how Abraham's God became the God of the Bible, the God of Israel, and the God and Father of Jesus, the Christ. He became the God of fertility, capable of giving Abraham an heir and capable of giving Himself an heir through Abraham's seed. Abraham would have an heir for himself in Sarah, and God would have an heir for Himself in Sarah's seed.

Abraham believed all that his God of nature promised him, and Abraham's faith became the gold standard for Bible faith. Abraham received an heir from his God of fertility and believed that God would keep His promise to bless all of his heirs in future

generations. Abraham's faith does not believe in any other God, nor can it obey or trust any other God. This unique faith of monotheism pleases God only when it believes in the virtue and character of God as revealed in keeping promises. Eventually faith in one God became the standard which allowed faith to believe and trust whatever it desired. Originally God spoke to Abraham explaining how and what he could trust God to do for him. What began with one God telling one man what to believe has become three religions where a billion people tell one God what they believe that He should do.

The devil believes in one God, but does not honor and please Him with faith. Today, three major religions of the world believe in the same God, but do they with the same *pleasing faith* of Abraham? Abraham had an advantage over the billions of people today whose faith is monotheism. Abraham believed what God asked him to believe, not in the additional tenets of faith required for monotheism today.

Somehow, faith in one God became the essential element of faith which would move God to act in one's behalf. However, God did not give Abraham the freedom to believe what pleased himself, rather what pleased God. Faith in God was limited to the revelation and promises of God. Faith is still free, but restricted to what God has promised. Faith cannot be free to believe anything it chooses. God is not responsible for man's free will - He is only responsible for His own. God never commits Himself beyond that which He is able to do; willing to do; and will do.

Abraham's God is capable of communion with man. Dumb idols cannot speak their will to their subjects - so that leaves the subjects with the responsibility to prescribe a lifestyle of faith in regard to dumb idols. On the other hand, a living God can make promises, cut covenants, reveal His will, give commandments, and prescribe a lifestyle for faith to live.

A Divine Dilemma

The Bible is the story of God seeking communion and fellowship with man without using fear or force. Ants, bees, etc., could live without faith – without God and divine control. They were instinctively guided in life, but man is a creature designed to live by faith.

God warned Adam of the evil results if he ate from the tree. Adam was free to eat or not to eat, but he was not exempt from the consequences of his actions. God could have prevented the disobedience, but not without taking control over Adam's faith. God's pleasure in His *faith creatures* depends on voluntary activity. If God takes away free will, He also takes away His pleasure and purpose in mankind altogether.

God gives man complete freedom to satisfy himself apart from Himself. If he does, then God is

left without communion and the pleasure He desires from man; because man will not respond to God unless man needs Him. Original creation was all one land with a perfect environment satisfying all of the desires of the flesh, resulting in God being left out of man's life entirely. Original nature provided abundance for man's physical life, resulting in eating, drinking, and making merry. God's dilemma is how to get man to commune with Him willingly from his heart without influence from without.

God could control man with bit and bridle, but this is no pleasure for God or man. A shepherd can lead sheep without a leash, but a butcher cannot drive them without a whip. One has influence from within the other from without. The original Edenic world provided the sheep with a pasture of plenty. Who needs a shepherd in this lifestyle?

When nature changed after the flood, resulting in famine, floods and pestilence, man had to abandon his lifestyle of continual plenty and begin to seek a friendly environment and fertile soil. He was forced to be thrifty and to conserve and preserve for the future. Economics became man's top priority. There was competition for the Fertile Crescent, empty stomachs to promote, marching conquerors, poly-gods to secure, protect and provide for life upon a fallen world.

Necessity is the mother of invention. Man needed someone who could control nature and secure his life on earth. This is why there were so many gods. Every tongue and tribe had its own priest or witch doctor who spoke for the dumb god who could not speak for himself.

Abraham claimed that he communed with a God who communed with him – that God called him to believe and trust in Him alone, and that God made promises to him concerning heirs and inheritance.

Moses claimed that God called him to fulfill a promise made to Abraham and give to Jacob the Land of Promise. Joshua completed the call of Moses, and twelve tribes became one nation under God in Palestine. This was a unique experience in human government. Never had man been ruled directly by God – the very Spirit which created him. Moses spoke of this fact, making sure that the people understood how privileged they were.

When the American Republic was established in 1783, it, likewise, was a unique experience in human government for man – thirteen colonies under one Constitution instead of a king. God's power to rule over Israel came from the consent or permission of the people. Likewise, the constitution must get its power to govern from the consent of those who it governs. God must have the voluntary submission of the people if the kingdom is to survive. Likewise, the Constitution must have free will submission to the common good or liberty cannot prevail.

Too much control by God or the government

from without will interfere with free will from within. We Americans often speak of a Constitutional crisis in our Republic, but there also arose a government crisis in Moses' kingdom when God was King.

From Freedom to Bondage

The nation created by God asked God to give them a king like all other nations of the world. God hearkened to their requests but warned them of the freedom which such a king would take away from them with an earthly throne. The people did not realize and appreciate the freedom they enjoyed in God's kingdom from Moses to Samuel. The kingdom of Moses would now become the kingdom of David. The people with a spiritual king would now have an earthly king. The people would now be ruled by one chosen from among them. He would have supreme sovereignty over them to use the people and their resources to support the throne.

Under King Solomon the burden of taxes and service became so severe that it divided the kingdom into two thrones. The building boom in those days resulted from the king's decree to build a house for God and palaces for all of his wives. Our recent building boom resulted from the government's decree to sell homes without collateral to those unable to pay unless the boom continued. When Solomon died, the next administration was faced with the economic crisis produced by the throne. The people demanded a change that would provide relief from the burdens of the throne. The throne had drafted thousands into service for the king's building program. The Sidonians were skilled craftsmen who were well-paid to cut timber in Lebanon. The navy was used to transport it. Everyone was employed in some way by the throne for projects which were unnecessary when God was King.

The people did not realize the freedoms that they would lose with an earthly king until the days of Solomon. David made the throne to serve the people, but Solomon made the people serve the throne. Herein is the essence of bondservant, or love servant.

From Bondage to Liberty

A man might be in bondage to a master until his debt was paid, whereupon he would be free from service to the master. If he willingly chose to continue in service, he became a bond slave because he had bonded himself to the master from his liberty. This can also be called grace service, because he did not owe it to the master. It was faith service because he trusted the master with his life. God sent Moses down to Egypt to free the chosen people from bondage to Pharaoh. Once they were free, they were under grace. They were not slaves to God, but they could be bondservants to God (faith servants).

Under Moses' law, a man could redeem himself from bondage if he had the price of redemption, or a kinsman could pay the price and set him free or the Day of Jubilee could set him free. In either case, the

servant was then under grace, not debt, and may use his liberty to become a bond servant. This is the kind of servitude which God desired from the congregation in the wilderness which He redeemed from Egypt - from bondage to Pharaoh by involuntary control, to bondage to God by voluntary control, using liberty as an occasion to serve God.

Serving Law or Serving Grace

Doing what you have to do or doing what you promised to do...going the first mile as a servant, or going the second mile as a bondservant...serving the legal law to pay a debt, or serving grace to pay a debt of love...these are the choices one had to make. God would not rule with rigor like Pharaoh, nor would he use a bit and bridle to control. If the people would not follow in faith, they would not possess the land.

Many years later the people had, in Solomon, a king so oppressive that it split the kingdom. A kingdom built by loyalty to David would fall from abuse of power by Solomon. David enjoyed the voluntary bond service of those so loyal to him that they would lay down their lives for him. His wish was their command. Even Uriah, a Hittite, served David loyally. The hearts of the people were one with David, desiring to make him king over Israel, even as God had ordained him.

A bond servant was under voluntary grace; he chose to go the second mile. He was under the reign of grace because his debt was fully paid. He could not begin love (grace) service until all requirements were fulfilled. The law (of debt) reigned until the debt was paid, and then grace reigned. A slave was not free until his debt was paid. Paul used this fact to explain Christian liberty for both Jew and Gentile. Adam's sin condemned the human family to death and the grave.

This means that every child born into the human family from the corrupt seed of Adam is in bondage to the reign of death. This makes death the master over all human life. The master (death) will take away everything the slave has earned by all of his works.

This means that if a soul gained the whole world, the master would get it instead of him. This makes mortal life vanity, whether a soul is of the circumcision or the uncircumcision. Everyone needs freedom from this master (law of sin and death). Everyone in Christ is free from death and under a new master of life.

Today, the state requires the companies that sell insurance to extend coverage one month beyond the period paid for. This is called a "grace period", because it is not earned with wages. However, it is required by law (not love) and is a temporal dispensation.

In Bible times, if a person purchased a slave, it could be for the purpose of service in his kingdom, or he could buy the slave and then set him free. The

kings of this world must have servants to support the throne. They often spoil other kingdoms and take slaves and put the people under tribute.

God set Israel free from Pharaoh, where they served involuntarily, in order that they be under grace to serve Him and one another voluntarily. Without this free will devotion to a common cause, the kingdom would fall. God is capable of saving His kingdom and making it the head (not the tail) of all the nations of the world. However, He gave it to the people to preserve and keep for themselves, and for posterity.

God gave to them the responsibility for success or failure. They should have asked themselves what they could do for God and their kingdom, but instead they murmured and complained about what God and kingdom did for them.

The history of Israel proves that God seeks to control and restrain from faith in the heart, not with bit and bridle from without. The Bible story makes this case very clear, but the people never understood it. They came to believe that they had failed to keep the law, when in truth, they had failed in grace and freedom.

Their failure was in the liberty of the second mile, not in required obedience to the first mile. This misunderstanding of law and grace was the challenge which Jesus faced with the Jews. They believed that God had forsaken the fathers because they had not kept the law. They believed that the pleasure of God prospered in the restraints of the law.

This made it very difficult for Jesus to obtain repentance, because they were successfully employed in the pleasure of God as they understood it. Every requirement of a servant in the first mile was fulfilled by pious Jews, but Jesus said that they were unprofitable servants until they acted in love beyond the law.

Constrained by Love, Not Law

This doctrine of love service is the most important matter in life for mankind. One must love himself if he is to serve self beneficially. Likewise, one must love others and God and country if the service is to be willing and voluntary. We are better stewards of law than we are of grace. We are like children who need guidance and restraint; like animals which need bit and bridle; like slaves who always know what they should do. Constrained by chains, we serve others involuntarily; but constrained by love, we serve ourselves and others voluntarily. This faith service is necessary under freedom when restraints are removed.

We tend to see lawful responsibility better than the responsibility of freedom. Free from law...free from restraint...free from responsibility...Oh, happy condition! We fail to see the responsibility and stewardship of freedom. We tend to say, "Don't put me back under law and restraint" when we are called

to duty.

Jesus spoke of this when He asked if one was not a good servant when he had to be, then would he be a good servant if he was free. If a person was not a good steward for another (like Joseph to Potipher) then would he be a good steward for himself? If one is not faithful in the required first mile, would he consider the second mile of voluntary service? If a man is not faithful in that which is another's, who will give him that which is his?

Jesus was speaking to the circumcision, which had not been faithful to Moses and the First Covenant. Why would God give them a better covenant, which was theirs in Christ – not their fathers in Moses. The new wine of the new vine in the New Testament is theirs because of a promise made to Abraham – not Moses. Prodigal sons had squandered the Mosaic inheritance, and now their children must return to God in repentance, where they receive the Christian inheritance – not the lost inheritance of Moses.

The First Covenant was to the circumcision with an inheritance of an earthly kingdom in a land of plenty. There were laws given for every aspect of human life – personal, family, religious, national, etc.... But God warned the people that if they forgot Him when they lived in peace, plenty, and prosperity, that He also would forget them and the enemy would spoil them.

When this happened so many times, the people began to think that they had failed in obedience to their laws, in spite of all the prophets calling on them to return to God in their hearts and obey the law of love. The Law of Moses can be kept by the circumcision of the flesh, but the law of love can only be kept by a circumcised heart. One must become a servant to the law of love to please God, but they believed that service to the laws of circumcision would please God. Herein we can differentiate between restraint by law and restraint from within, or voluntary control from involuntary control.

Death and Taxes

Money represents the physical wealth of the physical kingdoms of man upon the earth. It is the most valuable commodity in human life because it can obtain all the necessities of life, as well as much of what is desired (power and recognition). Money is what makes the world go 'round. Everyone needs money for life on earth. Parents provide for children until they can provide for themselves. Kings provide for their kingdoms, but where do they get the wealth?

Pharaoh forced the Israelites into service for the kingdom. He could have taxed the Egyptians, and then paid the Israelites to build pyramids. But this would not please the Egyptians and could destroy the kingdom. Slavery in Egypt was necessary to build burial tombs for the kings, but if the Egyptians had a spiritual king who would not die, then no tombs would be needed.

When the Israelites had God for a king, the throne served them. It was beneficial to them if they obeyed their king, but when a man became king, they served the throne. All benefits went to the throne. God ruled His people much like a husband and father rule the family. The Mosaic covenant was a marriage covenant between God, the husband, and Israel, the wife. God was pledged to serve the nation until death; then He would be a husband God to their children. The people would enjoy the blessings of life from the land and the husband king would enjoy the love and loyalty of the people. The wife would die a natural death to end the covenant, but not a premature death from lack of provision by a loving husband.

God's people would not be concerned with death and taxes like all the kingdoms of men around them. They need not save for rainy days and hard time; neither for old age and death. As long as the people pleased God with faith and love, He would please them with a life of plenty. But if the people forgot God, they would be like other people, having to contend with scarcity, depending on a king to provide for them.

It's the Economy, Stupid!

Cooperation is necessary for corporate life, whether family, business, state, etc.... A son, an employee, or a citizen – just one rebel can destroy the blessings produced by responsible stewards. A son like Absalom can divide a kingdom with bloodshed. A ruler like Hitler can divide the world with catastrophic results. Mankind is interdependent for collective life, but how do you obtain obedience for the common good when all seek their own?

The divine rights claimed by kings for their thrones have resulted in the loss of freedom for those under their jurisdiction. The colonies honored the king, but questioned his right to take away their divine right of freedom.

The kingdom of Christ had begun on Resurrection Day with Passover redemption out of Adam. God was King and ruler of Jesus' kingdom, just as He had reigned in the kingdom of Moses. Jesus was literally with God on a Spiritual throne, ruling over His kingdom through charismatic power – Spirit control from within, manifested in flesh life without.

The New Testament kingdom of Christ is like the Old Testament kingdom of Moses in every way except that it is Spiritual. The New Testament church of Christ is like the Old Testament church of Moses in every way except that it is Spiritual. The family of God in Christ is like the family of God in Moses in every way except that it is Spiritual. The economy in Christ's kingdom is like that in Moses kingdom except that it is Spiritual. The milk and honey in Christ's kingdom is Spiritual milk and Spiritual honey. When milk and honey are scarce, there is recession in the kingdom. The milk and honey from

the creation provided life for the flesh in Moses' kingdom, while the milk and honey from the Creator provides Life for the Spirit in the kingdom of Christ.

Life in the flesh is dependent upon the creation, but Spiritual Life is dependent upon the Creator. One comes from nature, and the other comes from God. Flesh life is terminated by death, which is separation from the source of life. Death is the enemy of flesh life in the kingdoms of earth, therefore, the fault in the kingdom of Moses. There was prolonged life in the inheritance of Moses, but there is everlasting life in the Christian inheritance. The prolonged flesh life of covenant blessings ended in death. Death has the power to cut the flesh off from its source of life in nature. Therefore, death ended life in Moses' kingdom.

Physical death can, likewise, end the flesh life for the children of God, but they still have access to God, the source of Spiritual Life. The entire kingdom of Christ is Spiritual. The Covenant is Spiritual...life is Spiritual...the King is Spiritual...the economy (food, clothing, shelter) is Spiritual...the citizen is Spiritual...the soldiers are Spiritual...the warfare is Spiritual.

From Moses to Samuel, the children of Israel had a Spiritual king; likewise, from Jesus to Constantine, the children of God were ruled by the Spirit of God, their Father. When the children of God (the church) came under the throne of a flesh kingdom, they began to serve the throne and to forget God. What had been Spiritual and everlasting became physical, earthly, and temporal.

The Christian church began under the reign of the Spirit of God, much like the church in the wilderness. The charismatic reign of God over the wilderness church before the introduction of an earthly throne corresponds to the charismatic reign of God over the Christian church before the merger with an earthly throne.

The ministerial offices (bishop and pastor) serving the people of God became magisterial offices, receiving service from the people. We see a similar transition in our Republic where civil servants have become civil masters. Constantine did not damage the church as much as his sons did. The first Christian emperor changed the focus and purpose of the church, giving it an earthly cause. He made the bishops to clarify doctrine and established unity in faith. He organized the divided church into an institution ruling with him - a co-regency of Christianity and Roman authority. The church merges with City Hall, and soon the church will be City Hall. Christian artifacts become a part of the economy as the Queen Mother travels to Palestine, collecting Christian souvenirs. The emperor employs the state in a building program for Christian churches.

This is the origin of the steeple church, and the beginning of the decline of the people church. The

church will soon become the state and barter the forgiveness of sins for money in the building program. (see Tetzels and Luther). This is how mammon, the economy of world kingdoms, becomes the economy of Christ kingdom. This is a stupid economy for any and all Christians.

Conclusion

It is not always true that good for the goose is also good for the gander. A good economy in Caesar's kingdom may not be good for the kingdom of Christ. These two kingdoms have two different economies - two very different building programs. One relates to flesh life, and the other to Spiritual Life. We are far more likely to see a building boom in man's business than we are to see a building (edifying) boom in God's business. Any kingdom may face an economic crisis, but if it is Christ's kingdom, it will be a Spirit crisis - not a money crisis.

We are seeing today a worldwide money crisis in all the nations of earth. Can Americans unite to solve a problem that could destroy us? We also have a crisis in Christianity of faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, Godliness, kindness, and love. Will we repent from serving mammon to solve a problem which could neuter us?

Do we respond to our problems as others have in times past, yet expect a different result? Or, will history repeat itself again?

If we do not reap what we sow, we mock God because He clearly said that we would. Therefore if we don't, then we make God to be a liar.

Paul said that such was impossible that no one can accomplish this. Everyone reaps exactly according to the kind and species of that which He planted. Even God Himself will not mock this law. If God wants a certain fruit, He will plant a seed that will produce it. And, if He wants good fruit He will plant good seed. He will not expect good fruit from evil seed.

God, Himself, has made the rule. If there ever was fruit that was not of the same kind as the seed that produced it, then God is mocked and proven wrong.

The Old Testament kingdom of Moses was a physical kingdom like other world kingdoms. But the New Testament Kingdom of Christ is spiritual and within the heart of regenerated people.

Scarcity of money and physical things can hinder physical kingdoms. But it takes coming up short of spiritual light and love to affect the heart.

The lack of money and credit can hinder earthly prosperity for everyone in those kingdoms; but the love of money can cause problems in any kingdom, especially the Kingdom of God because all love is to Him of Him and for him.

The need of money is not the same as the love of money. Money is needed in all the kingdoms of men; but not needed at all in the Kingdom of God. ###