

The People of God and the State

Session 3

Jesus and the New Testament

The Kingdom of God

Political and Historical Setting

Persians to Greeks

- 532 to 332 Persian Empire
- Phillip and Alexander the Great
- Hellenistic Rule
 - The Septuigent
 - Division of Palestine between Ptolemy and Antiochus

Seleucid Rule 198 BC

- Greek culture becomes primary
- Overthrow of Priesthood
- Desecration of the Temple and Erection of Pagan god

The Maccabean Revolt

- Judas Maccabee leads revolt in 167 B.C.
- Hasmonaean Rule
- Restoration of the Priesthood
- Sanhedrin Established
- Pharisees and Sadducees emerge as political groups

The Roman Victory

- Pompey conquers Judea
- Judea and Palestine under Roman rule
- The Herodian Dynasty Established

The Herodian Dynasty

- Herod the Great
- Herod Archelaus
- Herod Antipas
- Phillip son of Herod the Great and 1st Husband of Herodias
- Herod Arippa I
- Herod Agrippa II

Political Entities in Jesus Day

- Roman Government- Taxes and Pax Roma
- Herodian Dynasty- Secular
- Sanhedrin-High Priest
- Political Parties
 - Zealots
 - Pharisees
 - Sadducees

Political Climate of Jesus Day

- Messianic Hope
- Rebellion
- Pax Roma
- Status Quo

The Life of Jesus and the State

- Political Setting of Jesus' Birth- Matthew 2 and Luke 2
- Herod the Great and Infanticide- Matthew 2
- Flight to Egypt and Herod Archelaus

Jesus Encounters the Powers

- John the Baptist and Herod Antipas- Matthew 14
- Herod Antipas threatens Jesus- Luke 13
- Jesus arrested by Sanhedrin
 - Plotting against Jesus- Matthew 26:3-5
 - Arrested in Gethsemane- Matthew 26:47-56
 - Jesus tried before Sanhedrin-Matthew 26:57-68

Jesus Encounters the Powers 2

- Jesus before Pilate
- Jesus before Herod Antipas
- Jesus executed by government cooperation of
 - Rome, Herodians and Sanhedrin

Jesus Response to Governmental Powers

- The Kingdom of God Has Arrived
- The Kingdom of God is not the kingdom or kingdoms of this World

Jesus Response to Powers (cont.)

- Jesus' Second Temptation- Luke 4:5-8
- ⁵The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷If you worship me, it will all be yours."
- ⁸Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'[\[a\]](#)"

Jesus Response to Powers (Cont.)

- Question on Taxation- Matthew 22:15-22
- Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. ¹⁶ They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. ¹⁷ Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax^[a] to Caesar or not?”
- ¹⁸ But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, ²⁰ and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”
- ²¹ “Caesar’s,” they replied.
- Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

Jesus Response to Powers (Cont)

- The Trial of Jesus and Charges against Jesus- Luke 23:1-5
- Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. ² And they began to accuse him, saying, “We have found this man **subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Messiah, a king.**”³ So Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?”
- “You have said so,” Jesus replied.
- ⁴ Then Pilate announced to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no basis for a charge against this man.”⁵ But they insisted, “**He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching.** He started in Galilee and has come all the way here.”

Jesus Response to Powers (cont.)

- Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”³⁴ “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?”
- ³⁵ “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”
- ³⁶ Jesus said, **“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”**³⁷ **“You are a king, then!”** said Pilate.
- Jesus answered, **“You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”**

Kingdom of God and The State- N.T

- Against Authorities
- The Arrest and Persecution of Government against the Apostles:
 - Peter
 - John
 - James the brother of Jesus
 - Stoning of Steven
 - John in exile on Patmos
 - Paul

Submission to Authority

- Romans 13:1-7
- Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.² Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended.

- ⁴ For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. ⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

1 Peter 2:13-17

- ¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

Response to Authority

- There is a good purpose for government
 - Peace
 - Order
 - Proper Punishment

Submission for the “Lord’s Sake”

- Non anarchist
- Gain favor with people
- Good Citizens
- The Witness of the Church
- Submission as Free People

Jesus and Caesar

- Emperor Cult
- Caesar is Lord
- Jesus is Lord

But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than any human authority. - Acts 5:29

Summary

- Gods mission is the Kingdom of God that came fully in Jesus
- The Kingdom of God is not of this world.
- There is no kingdom of this world that is the kingdom of God
- Neither Jesus nor the Apostles utilized the state to further the Kingdom of God.
- The follower of Jesus should respond to the state in such a way as to further the Kingdom of God and preserve the witness of the church.

The People of God and the State in the Life of Jesus and the New Testament

I. The overarching theme is “The Kingdom of God.” The coming of the Kingdom of God in Jesus is the overarching theme to understanding the people of God and the state in the life of Jesus and the New Testament. It is the Kingdom of God, fully in Jesus and understood by the church, that informs the political and non-political actions of the people of God.

II. Political Historical Setting

A. Persian Empire to Greeks

1. 532-332-Persian Control of Palestine
2. Phillip and Alexander the Great
3. Hellenistic Rule
4. Division of Palestine between Ptolemy and Antiochus
5. Antiochus and Seleucid Rule- 198 BC
6. Overthrow of Priesthood, Desecration of the Temple, and Greek Culture

B. The Maccabean Revolt- Judas Maccabee and Hasmonaean Rule-167 BC

C. The restoration of the priesthood and Sanhedrin

D. Pompey of Rome conquers Judea

E. Judea and Palestine under Roman Rule

F. The Herodian Dynasty

1. Herod the Great
2. Herod Archelaus
3. Herod Antipas
4. Phillip Herod
5. Herod Agrippa I and II

III. Political Entities at the time of Jesus

A. Roman Government- Taxes and Pax Roma

B. Herodian Dynasty- Secular and not viewed as truly Jewish

C. Sanhedrin and the High Priest

1. Priestly families
2. Aristocratic
3. The 71
4. The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem as the Supreme Council or Court
5. Power is limitless and then limited in Judea to religious matters
6. They can arrest, put on trial and imprison.

D. Three political responses to Roman Rule

1. Zealots
2. Pharisees
3. Sadducees

E. Political Issues

1. Messianic Hope and Rebellion
2. Pax Roma-Status Quo

IV. The Life of Jesus and the State

A. Political setting of Jesus birth-Matthew 2 and Luke 2

B. Herod the Great and great infanticide

C. Flight to Egypt- Return under Herod Archelaus

D. Jesus encounter with Herod Antipas

1. John the Baptist- Matthew 14

2. Herod threatens Jesus-Luke 13

E. Jesus arrested by Sanhedrin

F. Jesus before Pilate and Herod Antipas

G. Jesus executed by government and cooperation between Rome, Herodians and Sanhedrin

V. The Response of Jesus to the power of the state

A. The Kingdom of God has arrived in Jesus

B. The Kingdom of God is not the kingdom of this world

1. 2nd Temptation of Jesus- Luke 4: 5-8

2. Question of Taxation – Matthew 22:15-22

3. Trial of Jesus- Luke 23:1-5

a. Opposes Taxes

b. Claims to be a King

c. Stirs up people everywhere

d. Inciting a riot

4. My kingdom is not of this world. John 18:33-37

VI. Kingdom of God and the State in New Testament

A. Against the authorities

1. Paul, Peter, John, James the brother of Jesus, stoning of Steven, Church in persecution and John in exile on Patmos.

B. Submission to Authority- Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-17

C. Why would Paul and Peter write these words?

1. There is a purpose for government thus it is God established.

a. Peace

b. Order

c. Proper punishment

2. Submission comes for “the Lord’s sake”

a. non anarchists

b. gain favor with the people

c. good citizens

d. the witness of the church

3. Submission as free people

D. This is not complete submission, nor did Paul and Peter expect that in this instruction. This is a general instruction concerning everyday living and life.

1. Emperor Cult and increased demand

2. Caesar is Lord

3. Jesus is Lord

Summary:

1. God’s mission is the Kingdom of God that fully came in the person of Jesus.

2. The Kingdom of God is not of this world and no kingdom of this world is the kingdom of God.

3. Neither Jesus nor the Apostles utilize the state to further the Kingdom of God.

3. The follower of Jesus should respond to the state in such a way to further the Kingdom of God and preserve the witness of the church.