

THREE INSTITUTIONS

The Scriptures speak of three great institutions of God. All three of these have not been in co-existence for very long. The three are; 1) the civil government, 2) the church, and 3) the family. God has given man three things to live productive, spiritually upright, and moral lives.

The Civil Government.

The civil government is ordained of God. Any authority that holds power is there because God has permitted it. The Bible speaks of this arrangement in the book of Romans, specifically the 13th chapter. In this passage, the apostle Paul tells the brethren at Rome to be submissive to the authorities. He states that the authorities have the power and right, to use the sword and therefore to be faithful Christians, one must give allegiance to the "State" as well as Christ. We are to pay our taxes and keep the law of the land or be in opposition to God. We should never have to compromise our faith by obeying civil law, but we do violate our faith by transgressing godly civil law. Nevertheless, we also realize that this institution must take second place when man's laws contradict God's laws.

The Church.

The highest institution known to man is the church. This blessed body of Christ is the earthly home for all of the saved, Jesus died for the church and built it upon the confession that He was the promised Messiah, the very Son of God. After Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the apostles began the New Testament church on the day of Pentecost (about 33AD) and it has been alive ever since. One cannot be saved outside of the church, for the church is the saved (Acts 2:47; KJV).

The Family.

But the oldest institution of God is that of the family. Husband-wife, parents-children, and brother-sister relationships that exist in the family are as old as man. It is in this particular set-up that we learn what, to be, what not to be. In the context of the family, we supposed to receive the proper encouragement to live our lives for God. However, this does not mean that the family is a substitute for the church. When the family unit breaks down mankind will not have most profitable framework for molding and shaping young minds. It is not the church's responsibility to raise children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." This can only be done by the parents in the home. Many of our problems today, which we call Juvenile Delinquency, are mainly the result of parental delinquency. The world, the school, the church, or the government cannot effectively teach young people right from wrong. First by example, and then by instruction, children can indelibly ascertain proper behavior from undisciplined immaturity.

The government's job is to keep law and order in the society which should be done by following godly precepts as outlined in the Bible. The church is to declare the manifold wisdom of God, thereby saving the world from sin (Eph. 3:10); while the home (family) is the groundwork of teaching, training and proper discipline to ensure that the other two institutions are not burdened with load they cannot carry.

A Positive Spiritual Attitude (PSA) is always achieved when people realize what "part they have to play" in their lives (husband, wife, parent, son, or daughter), and understanding what God has given us to aid us in that "journey." Lawbreaking, sin, divorce, parental and juvenile delinquency break down and begin to destroy the three great institutions of God. PSA helps us to flee these things and puts life in the proper perspective to live correctly in all three.