

## Edenic Design and Government Usurpation

### Three Scripture Passages to Introduce the Topic

Genesis 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Romans 13:1-5 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

### The Argument

God is God. He owns everything. And He is boss.<sup>1</sup>

This means there is no man, government, church elder, scientist, academician or angel that is allowed to usurp His authority or alter His commandments. None of these have the ability to change God's design for mankind and the created order.

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<sup>1</sup> That word "boss" may sound silly. Sorry. It is never my intention to sound that way in regard to God. Treating God with disrespect is a significant problem in western culture.

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What God has made is of stone. And the things He has commanded concerning people have been engraved on the stone.<sup>2</sup>

In the first three chapters of Genesis we meet our parents: Adam and Eve. And it was in the Garden of Eden that man learned his purpose. Three of the things God announced over Adam were that he was 1) made in his Creator's image.<sup>3</sup> Also, that God established for him a 7-day week, in which he was to 2) work six days and 3) rest in worship on one.<sup>4</sup> These were seminal. They are God's original intention and meant to direct us.

Therefore, it is a corruption of power for any civil magistrate (whether mayor, governor, assemblyman, president, prime minister or king) by threat of force, to prevent people from pursuing their livelihoods on the six-days of labor, and it is improper for the magistrate to refuse citizens their assembling for worship on the Lord's Day. It is also Biblically illegal for governing officials to mandate mask wearing to cover up what is part of the image of God as represented in the face of man.<sup>5</sup>

I say it is a corruption of power, because it is an attempt to dictate to men things contrary to God's prescribed law and order. It is contrary to natural law as well as Biblical Law.<sup>6</sup>

You could liken it to a student playground monitor who happens to be a bully. All gussied-up in his orange-fluorescent vest, he, of his own determination, tells the other children they cannot play on the snow hill for they will get hurt. Yet, if the school principal never made such a rule, then what you have is just a bully trying to control others in contradiction to the true rule maker. Are his intentions good? Is it up to him to decide about the children's safety? No it is not.<sup>7</sup>

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2 Historically, the Reformed tradition, of which I belong, has considered the Ten Commandments the Law of God. The Law is a transcript of the character of God. It is God's universal law for all peoples and nations.

3 Genesis 1:26

4 Genesis 2:2-3

5 See my paper, Are We Masking the Image of God in the Face of Man? Published 10/21/2020. [https://defytyrants.com/01/Masking\\_the\\_Image.pdf](https://defytyrants.com/01/Masking_the_Image.pdf)

6 I do not mean to imply that natural law is contrary to biblical law. The two are congruent. They agree. They both manifest God's character. Biblical law is more concise and given to men to instruct them for their good and so they can fulfill their dominion purposes. Biblical law is a "fuller" expression as God has added to His more general revelation already present in the creation and known as natural law. Somewhere Greg Bahnsen called the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments the "clear and correcting" expression of God's created and natural order. What Bahnsen said would've probably been sufficient for this footnote.

7 Whether the playground monitor is malevolent or benevolent by his intentions may soften our hearts toward him, but it does not solve the problem. He has positioned himself a lesser rule maker who is contradicting the rules of the ultimate one.

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Eden was where man's design and commands began. God filled in the details as He gave us the Scripture. His commands were sent down Mount Sinai in the hands of Moses on two tablets. He gave us greater detail on how we should spend our time.

“Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”<sup>8</sup>

As I mentioned before, no man, government, church elder, scientist, academician or angel or bully playground monitor is allowed to usurp this command of the Creator. This means if a company, wanting to make more money, requests you to work on the Lord's Day, you should refuse. It is not the prerogative of a business owner to set aside the Law of nature and of nature's God. In fact, if you want to make something illegal, let it be companies running their business on the Lord's Day.<sup>9</sup>

We easily accept this principle, that God is not to be usurped, when it is applied to family government. No father or mother has been given authority over God that he or she might set aside His commands for the children. But we hesitate to apply it when it comes to other governmental institutions. But it should go without saying, that no mayor, sheriff, governor, president, king or pharaoh or church officer is greater than God either - that any of them should act the usurper.

### **Man's Purpose Has Been Put on Hold**

When an earthly authority dictates to its members commands that defy the created order, it frustrates us as creatures. It is not difficult to understand why people throughout the nation (and world) have been baffled and despondent by orders to stay at home, shut down businesses, and stop gathering for worship. It is because people are being expected to put God's fourth commandment on the back-burner. This goes against the grain of our creatureliness. It steals our purpose.

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8 Exodus 20:9-11

9 Nehemiah records how he strived to govern faithfully for the LORD. One of the things he did was to oppose all buying and selling on the Sabbath day. Nehemiah went so far as to threaten to arrest those coming to the walls of Jerusalem to trade during the course of the 24-hour Sabbath. He instructed the Levites to guard the gates in order to Keep the Sabbath Day holy. [See Nehemiah 13:15-22]

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Is it any wonder that Christians have become disappointed and disillusioned by their church and civil leaders, who have prevented them from worshipping God in presence with each other since last March? Some have simply allowed their church officers to choose this course, others have refused to meet because of the civil magistrate's threats of fines and imprisonment.

As for the six days of labor, there are countless businesses that have shuttered their doors forever due to loss of revenue created by the fear of COVID and the mandates of governors and mayors that they must close until the threat of the pandemic passes. The National Federation of Independent Businesses reported just before Christmas, “[T]hat 25% of small businesses won’t survive another 6 months under the current economic conditions, up from 20% in November.” And they say, “A further 22% of small businesses anticipate closing within the next 12 months if there is no economic change.”<sup>10</sup>

These are the effects of governmental restraints. They have come in direct conflict with the Word of God. The restraints have undermined God’s Law which is designed for our good. God instructed all of us to take dominion and labor for six days and rest on the seventh with worship. This is a great blessing as well as an obligation. What man dare get in the way of that?

### **Rand Paul’s Concern that Governors Have Been Allowed to Act Like Tyrants**

On December 25<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Day, U.S. Senator Rand Paul (a Libertarian) issued a statement concerned that state governors have been allowed to act like tyrants. The Senator reported how in his own state of Kentucky, “Gov. Andy Beshear has had pandemic restrictions in place, some of which include a mask mandate, limiting private gathering sizes to small groups, minimal capacity for indoor small businesses like gyms, carry-out dining only, and no onsite schools.”<sup>11</sup>

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10 [https://www.nfib.com/content/analysis/coronavirus/covid-relief-deal-momentum-expected-to-extend-small-business-relief/?roi=echo4-43868068215-99706423-d0c8bf4fa17dc1606b9aa54772cb12fb&utm\\_campaign=eNews12172020&utm\\_source=eNews-WI&utm\\_medium=Email&mem=1](https://www.nfib.com/content/analysis/coronavirus/covid-relief-deal-momentum-expected-to-extend-small-business-relief/?roi=echo4-43868068215-99706423-d0c8bf4fa17dc1606b9aa54772cb12fb&utm_campaign=eNews12172020&utm_source=eNews-WI&utm_medium=Email&mem=1)

11 [https://www.theepochtimes.com/sen-rand-paul-governors-should-never-have-been-allowed-to-become-dictators\\_3632629.html?utm\\_source=news&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=breaking-2020-12-25-6](https://www.theepochtimes.com/sen-rand-paul-governors-should-never-have-been-allowed-to-become-dictators_3632629.html?utm_source=news&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=breaking-2020-12-25-6)

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How is it possible that in the name of public health and supposedly for the good of the citizenry,<sup>12,13,14</sup> the governor of Kentucky has gotten in the way of those three things God announced to Adam and Eve? He restricted worship. He restricted people's ability to labor and put food on their family's table. And he forced people to wear masks, covering up their faces which were made to glorify God. This is usurpation. And people should not only be frustrated by this government interference, but they should refuse to comply with it. The governor is not God.<sup>15</sup> Further, I ask you to consider, who will God hold responsible if you do not provide sufficiently for your family? You. God will hold you responsible if you decide to allow mere men to tell you to do the opposite of what He told you to do.<sup>16</sup>

Senator Paul went on with examples of tyranny in his statement, saying, "New York state in mid-December ordered restaurant owners to stop indoor dining again. The governor's order came despite opposition from the beleaguered restaurant industry, which warned of holiday-season layoffs at a time when the federal government has yet to pass an additional CCP virus relief package.

Many people are leaving states like New York and California, citing pandemic restrictions. More than 126,000 people moved out of New York state between July 2019 and July 2020, according to preliminary Census Bureau data. That's the biggest population drop of any state this year.

The Kentucky senator criticized governors locking down their economies because they have been receiving money from the federal government's

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12 The laws of magistrates are always presented as a good thing, wrapped up with the trimmings of "necessary for the wellbeing of the people." And some laws are for the good of the people. But some are bad. You determine which is which by how they do or don't comply with the Word of God.

13 The Prohibition of Alcohol as a U.S. Constitutional Amendment was ungodly law. It was established in the name of the public good. The same goes for some State laws against smoking in restaurants. Both represent governments overreaching into behavior that God did not prescribe for the civil magistrate to punish. I personally believe these things would "come to a head" if some State or Federal government would require the wearing of car helmets as the law of the land. There would be a great outcry against it as safety would quickly take a back seat to mussed-up hair.

14 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's, The Gulag Archipelago, provides countless examples of Russian law enacted for the *good* of the citizenry.

15 This doesn't mean that people should disregard health and safety. Each of us should want to take precaution for our own health as well as the health of others. Christ commands us to love others as we love our self. See Matthew 22:39. However, this is a personal decision and something quite different from forced compliance.

16 This does not mean that those in positions of authority (state, church and family) will be free from God's judgment. Jesus warned, "...whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea." See Matthew 18:6. I mention church and family authorities as well, because they are not absolved of their responsible rule either. Church officers and parents have made decisions for those under their care that have challenged God's Edenic design.

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various stimulus packages, including the last CARES Act. “The only thing that will get de Blasio and Cuomo to finally open up is when they run out of other people’s money,” Paul said.

“So I think that we shouldn’t be passing out any money to the states, we shouldn’t be rewarding their bad behavior,” he continued. “And really, this has probably been the worst time in the history of our country for power being accumulated into the hands of very few people.”

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has been criticized for placing too many restrictions on her constituents. Citing a surge in CCP virus infections in her state, Whitmer ordered on Nov. 15 that dine-in restaurants and bars, in-person learning at high schools and colleges, and many other businesses and activities close during the three weeks between Nov. 18 and Dec. 8.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom said on Dec. 21 that the regional stay-at-home order imposed by the state for the entirety of Southern California will almost assuredly be extended beyond next week’s expiration date.

New government data shows that the pandemic has had a moderate-to-large negative impact on over three-quarters of the nation’s small businesses, with the hardest-hit being those in accommodation and food services.

In addition to the small-business impact of the restrictions, houses of worship have been impacted by governors’ trying to restrict the number of people who can gather at places of worship or if they can be open at all.”

### **Man is God’s creature. He does not belong to Men.**

Now, I am not a Libertarian<sup>17</sup> as Rand Paul. Although, I am a fan of limiting government overreach.<sup>18</sup> After all, God did not make any government to replace Him. They are supposed to be His ministers. Period. They are supposed to act on His behalf, and according to His Law. We are never to be a law unto ourselves. That is idolatry. And it is the primary problem for which God ejected mankind from the Garden to begin with.<sup>19</sup>

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17 A libertarian is an advocate or supporter of a political philosophy that advocates only minimal state intervention in the free market and the private lives of citizens.

18 See 1 Samuel Chapter 8; Proverbs 28:16; Proverbs 29:2; and a host of other verses warn against ruler’s acting badly.

19 Genesis 3:22-24

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It is a grave mistake for any man or assembly of men to think they can create law better than God. Man is not able to give himself purpose. God did that. Anytime men rule by law in contradiction to God's Law, then they rule corruptly.

And though Moses's Ten Commandments were given to the Hebrew people, it is immediately apparent that God's Law has ancient roots that reach deeper than merely Abraham's descendants. The basis upon which they were told to labor six days and rest on the seventh is God Himself at creation: "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day."

And so, from the beginning of time, mankind has experienced the warp and weave of a seven-day week. No culture or kingly dynasty has been able to discard it. Even the French Revolutionaries, who were hostile to God and the Church, could not redefine the pattern of a week successfully from seven days to ten days. They tried. They wanted a secular calendar in place of a Christian one. They designed their week differently than God. It would require nine days of labor and one day of rest. But their imposition of a ten-day week lasted for a little over nine years and then they reverted back to join the rest of humanity.<sup>20</sup>

It is as R.J. Rushdoony wrote in his book, Revolt Against Maturity, "The humanistic dream of paradise is inescapably coercive, because it requires a humanity to exist in that dreamed-of order which has little relationship to existing man. Since man is God's creature, not man's, man is simply incapable of becoming the new model man of humanistic dreams. However much he is educated, brainwashed, coerced, and threatened, he remains...God's creature still."<sup>21</sup>

It is likely that God has somehow built His seven-day week into our DNA. At least, biblical people would argue that God's, "invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made."<sup>22</sup> Whether a seven day week has been imprinted is a question to consider. However, we could certainly argue the case for six millennia plus of muscle memory.

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20 From the article cited below, we read, "By the time Napoleon Bonaparte became First Consul of France in 1799, the French Revolutionary Calendar had already been in effect for 6 years. Since he had a habit of going around conquering his European neighbors, the new calendar was exported to other countries under French rule, including parts of Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. But Napoleon had bigger fish to fry than to convince local populations (including the French themselves) that the French Republican calendar was a fabulous idea."  
<https://snippetsofparis.com/french-revolutionary-calendar/>

21 Rushdoony, Rousas John, Revolt Against Maturity, p. 58 Thoburn Press, Fairfax, Virginia, 1978.

22 Romans 1:18

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Also, according to Jesus Christ, God's Gospel and Law is supposed to go out into all the world. Isaiah speaks to times of Messiah saying, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."<sup>23</sup> It is by the good news of Jesus Christ that God has demonstrated His character and presses all men to repent of sins, seek forgiveness through Jesus Christ, and obey the commandments for the good of His Kingdom.<sup>24</sup>

### **The Pandemic Has Exposed a Lack of Christianity**

The recent pandemic is a fire that has burned dirty and billowed smoke, but the wind has shifted westerly and allowed many to rub their eyes clear. Here is what we are finding.

We are finding that we live in a nation that is no longer mainly Christian. It hasn't been for decades. Yet, it is a surprise and a concern to some of us. (Perhaps we have been too naive and probably inattentive.) But it used to be that our families, relatives, neighbors and co-workers were church attenders. They believed that the Son of God was the ruler of all nations, the King of kings, and that people needed to obey Him.<sup>25</sup>

We would frown upon the black sheep brother who no longer went to church, got into trouble with naughty girls, and lipped off to dad. We understood that the mayor and police of our town or village, existed to catch and punish bad people and thereby be a blessing to those who were good.

That was the civil magistrate's purpose, to punish evil doers and approve of those who do good.<sup>26</sup> The authorities were not permitted to make up their own rules contrary to God's. They were like us. Christ's subjects and therefore rule followers. And for that reason, the authorities were on our side and we were on theirs.

People were not without *sin*. But parents knew they had to teach and discipline. And pastors and elders also had to teach and discipline. And the magistrate had to deal with those who did not learn from the family and the church.

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23 Isaiah 11:9b

24 According the Great Commission, the Church is supposed to go into the whole world and teach all that Christ commanded. The Great Commission is found in Matthew 28:18-20.

25 A form of Christianity without substance may have been the reality of my younger years. There must have been an outward religious behavior that lacked a pure, inner motivation. Corn husks without the kernels. This kind of adherence to Christian behavior is short-lived and (as John the Baptist warned) destined to be cut down by the LORD.

26 Romans 13:1-7

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Combine these three ingredients of 1) a world-wide pandemic, 2) governing authorities who do not necessarily rule according to God's commands, and 3) decision-making that factors in the queerness of what they've termed asymptomatic infection, and the result is humanity's shelving of God's commands.

Asymptomatic infection means you might have the virus but show no signs of it and never will. In other words no one can tell the difference between the healthy and the sick. And so we are told we must fear the *invisible* transmission of the virus. And this asymptotically-guided decision making by governing officials has become like a devil's lever by which men and angels have tyrannized the world and robbed people of God's design for them.<sup>27</sup> It's like they've pried away, using this unseeable threat, all that we are supposed to be doing.

Make no mistake. There is biblical support for quarantining people with certain types of disease, but based upon symptomatic evidence.<sup>28</sup> And we should be grateful that many governing officials and health experts work hard to warn and protect the citizenry. And we should appreciate their earnest recommendations to be cautious regarding our health and our neighbor's health. We should want to be aware of these things.

However, a concern for health and a health emergency is not a good excuse to dehumanize individuals by preventing people from fulfilling their God-given purpose. This must be resisted. It is not acceptable for anyone to put asunder God's commandments. God is king. He alone is sovereign. He is boss.

We must teach those in authority. They must be diligently and patiently taught. Both will be important because many have no biblical moorings. Your attempt to correct biblically may be the first ever for them.<sup>29</sup> And it won't help that you may not be listened to due to the fact you are asking them to join you in opposition to other governing officials. We can seem harsh if we are not careful. Remember, there was a better Pharaoh in Joseph's day than in Moses' day. Not every mind is hostile. And those who are receptive to the truth will need good citizens to support them. And Christians are counted as the best of citizens. Of course some in authority are ideological enemies - committed enemies of a God they consider a myth.<sup>30</sup>

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27 I do not believe "Uncle Screwtape" and "dear Wormwood" could have concocted a better plan to undo men. See for reference: C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters: How a Senior Devil Instructs a Junior Devil in the Art of Temptation, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1961, New York.

28 Leviticus 13, 14 & 15 is one area of Scripture that attempts to deal with the issue.

29 Clergy and laity must be vigilant teaching the Word of God to people, including the civil magistrates. *Times of crisis* are not the time to hide your light, so to speak.

30 Teaching the nations is imperative for the advancement of biblical thinking. But it is not only governors who need correcting. We must share God's standards with co-workers, restaurant servers, grocery store owners, airline attendants, etc. They all must know where to stand and why.

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**In an article by Charlotte Cuthbertson, dated January 12<sup>th</sup> we read:**

MINNEAPOLIS—Bar and restaurant owner Lisa Monet Zarza made a decision in November to go all-in. She's prepared to lose her businesses and go to jail in the fight to keep her bar operating and her staff employed.

Zarza, the co-owner of Alibi Drinkery in Lakeville, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis, is currently being threatened with jail time, \$3,000-per-day fines, and suspension of her food and liquor licenses as she opens her bar against Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz's executive orders.

For nine months, like other bar and restaurant owners, Zarza has had to do flip-flops to keep up with the different executive orders issued by Walz, a Democrat, during the pandemic. In mid-March of last year, Walz declared the state in a peacetime emergency for 30 days and has renewed the status each month since, giving himself broad authority.

...Nine months later, when the order to close again came down, Zarza had had enough and reopened fully on Dec. 16. "You can't take something that belongs to me and threaten me with jail time," she said. "So they're trying to take my liquor license. They're trying to take my food service license. They served me with the temporary restraining order. They served me with a cease and desist."<sup>31</sup> On Dec. 18, she was served a temporary restraining order and a temporary injunction to close down; a court hearing was set for the following week. "The temporary injunction would prevent her from operating the business," Zarza's lawyer, Mike Paddon, said. "If she operated that business, she'd be in violation of a court order and could be actually arrested. That's what's scary. For contempt of court."

She has been vocal about reopening against the governor's orders as she wanted to get as much community support behind her as possible, especially as retail stores had been allowed to open since before Black Friday.

"Menards has a sign that says their occupancy is 7,000 people," Zarza said, referring to the mega sporting and outdoors chain. "And I'm sorry, but our bar holds 100 people. And they all have the right to be here. "The Constitution guarantees your rights. So, if you don't feel safe going into my

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31 The fact that anyone is required to obtain a liquor license and a food license means that they have already submitted to a government that believes it has the right and power to determine people's livelihood. To be forced to obtain a license means the licensor has the power to permit or deny. I would consider this an abuse of authority. God did not establish the civil magistrate to punish or restrain people who righteously pursue their calling. This doesn't prevent a magistrate from punishing a restaurant that poisons its clientele.

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restaurant, don't come in. If you feel safe coming into my restaurant, come in."

...Zarza employs 22 people at Alibi, about half of whom are single parents. "Our staff couldn't survive," she said. "There's five or six staff members here that have two jobs, both those jobs are in the restaurant industry. Those are just five of the single parents that we have that support their family 100 percent. And they lost all sources of income from that shut down.

"It was horrible. And when we opened. there were a lot that said they couldn't come back because they were afraid that they're going to get arrested, they're afraid they're going to get fined. Because if you read the executive order, [Walz] was saying he'd come after anyone that was working. So we've got probably about half of our staff that came back on the 16th when we opened." Zarza estimates that she lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue in 2020.

This is a travesty. You don't lose that kind of revenue because your average person is afraid of a virus. You lose it because a governor decided to enforce a law. How is it proper that any civil magistrate should use the sword to inflict punishment on someone trying to go about their dominion task entrusted to them by God<sup>32</sup> The law of God announces that you take a man's life when you take his upper millstone. For the Hebrews it meant you were not to take from someone an essential component from their hand-mill, by which they ground their wheat, barley or corn. If you took the upper millstone, you disabled the man from the ability to make bread and feed his family. To take the upper millstone was to injure life itself. It was to take his soul.<sup>33</sup> And so, as Christians, we are to stand up for the oppressed. Loving others does not only mean being concerned about the feeble in a pandemic. It means we must do justice and show kindness for the likes of Ms. Zarza and others in our community. Furthermore, what better way to help the community as a whole than when we support employers, productivity, a robust economy, and the fulfillment of every man's calling?

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32 I do understand there is more to dominion than running a business or showing up daily at your place of employment. Dominion involves all responsible aspects of life. However, it is uncritical to think normal people will be fine if they spend their days painting rooms in their house, teaching the kids at the kitchen table, mowing the lawn, weeding the garden, etc., All are worthy to be called dominion tasks but these rarely are the types of labor activities by which you will pay your bills and put food on the table.

33 Theologian Charles Ellicott says the word life, when translated from the Hebrew, literally means soul. (See Ellicott's Commentary from 1897 reference on Deuteronomy 24:6) Zondervan, Republished 1979.

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“...Zarza’s business model is based around being a community bar, which was apparent as Alibi opened at 11 a.m. on New Year’s Eve. By 11:30 a.m., the place was bustling, with staff and customers happy to see each other again.

However, that didn’t come without a cost. Two days later, Zarza came to work to see graffiti all over her building, including “Fascist bar” written in large blue letters along her front windows and “Nazis” along the side wall. “Some of the messages that I’ve gotten from people—horrible, horrible, horrible messages—like ‘I hope you die,’ ‘I hope your family dies,’” Zarza said. “I’ve been followed, I’ve been threatened, just because I want to open my business.”<sup>34</sup>

“Every single season, we see something else that’s trying to tear apart America, and we’re supposed to be standing together and fighting together. “That’s what I see this whole pandemic is—it was one more way for them to segregate America. And it’s just so sad.”

On Jan. 7, a judge issued Zarza a \$3,000-per-day fine if she opened again, and she felt forced to close the doors. That is, until Walz’s executive order allowed the reopening of restaurants on Jan. 11, at 50 percent capacity.

“Given the fact that Defendant is purposely promoting its violation of the injunction, exposing a multitude of patrons at the establishment, the fine should be in an amount to achieve compliance,” the judge wrote.

For now, Alibi is open, but Zarza is bracing for the next battle.

“It sounds like you’re in Germany, it sounds like you’re in Russia, it sounds like you’re in a communist country, when you say you’re going to go to jail for opening your business,” she said.<sup>35</sup>

On Dec. 28, the Star Tribune [listed](#) 94 restaurants in the Twin Cities that had permanently shuttered after a year of shutdowns and riots devastated the region. The list was far from comprehensive, but was still about triple the number reported in 2019.<sup>36</sup>

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34 I preached much of this paper as a sermon. And as I read this portion of Zarza’s experience I blurted out, “This reminds me of the brownshirts of Germany prior to World War II.” A congregant came up to me afterward and confirmed, “That is exactly what I thought about as your read that story.” So I thought it worth sharing as a footnote.

35 Remember, there is something terribly wrong when good people experience the wrath of the sword for doing good. Yes. I understand some will accuse non-compliers of breaking the law, and therefore guilty of wrongdoing. This is obviously part of what I am disputing in this paper.

36 [https://www.theepochtimes.com/minnesota-bar-owner-fights-system-over-shutdowns\\_3653426.html](https://www.theepochtimes.com/minnesota-bar-owner-fights-system-over-shutdowns_3653426.html)

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### **The One and the Many – A Christian Harmony**

Historically, philosophers and statesmen have argued that the good of the whole outweighs the good of the individual - that mankind in general is more important than a single man. However, this is not a Christian argument. A Christian argument recognizes that neither mankind (as united) nor man (as an individual) should lose significance. The individual, as made by God, is not to be absorbed into the mass of the ONE (humanity) if it is at the expense of his particular manhood. If a decision in the name of mankind costs any man his manhood, it should not happen.

You see, unlike un-Christian worldviews, the Bible teaches us that God is Triune. He is three particular persons as One God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And the three though particular do not lose their distinctiveness by being absorbed into the ONE. They maintain consistently their distinctiveness (their particularity) and their Oneness (His unity). Christianity respects the ONE and the Many. And God has created man in His image. So we are, like Him, to respect both the ONE and the Many simultaneously.

Other worldviews (aka. religions) do not accept this tension and so they do not reason along these lines in regard to knowledge. Other worldviews are willing to sacrifice the Many for the good of the ONE. All of them eventually take from men their particularity as individuals because of a supposed higher purpose. This was the impetus for child sacrifice in the worship of Molech.<sup>37</sup> The sacrifice of the Many (individuals) for the good of the ONE is also observed in the Aztec, Maya and Inca civilizations, as well as various Nationally Socialistic governments and Communist regimes. For the good of the ONE, men become willing to sacrifice each other in service to their false religions and misguided philosophies.

Most often it is the state that assumes the prerogative of the ONE and by law determines to disregard or diminish the distinctiveness of the Many. Rousas John Rushdoony explains that neither the ONE nor the Many is reducible to the other. There is no ultimacy to be sought. The proper Christian concept of the ONE and the Many is rooted in the Triune God, in Whom equal ultimacy exists eternally.<sup>38</sup>

### **A False Interpretation of Man in Eden**

What about this? Someone might try to go back to the Garden of Eden and argue that God made “mankind” in Adam and Eve. God gave to “mankind” the commands to labor

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<sup>37</sup> Leviticus 18:21; Leviticus 20:2-5; 2 Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 32:35

<sup>38</sup> Rushdoony, Rousas John, The One and the Many. Thoburn Press: Fairfax, Virginia, 1978. pp. 16-17

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six days, to be fruitful and multiply, and so forth. But God did not necessarily give these commands to particular men. In other words, not everyone is required to comply with God's edenic design, as long as mankind in general is complying.<sup>39</sup> And by this interpretation, a dishonest man gets to relinquish his responsibility by giving it over to Mankind (the ONE, aka. the state) to figure things out for him.

An example: A married couple, by this clouded interpretation, is not commanded to be fruitful and multiply as long as people in general are having children. Or I do not need to labor six days and rest/worship on the Lord's Day as long as that is the basic pattern that is in use by society. In essence, by treating the commands of God as given to "mankind" and not to man, we make elbow room to excuse ourselves from obedience. By such reasoning we forfeit the beauty of the tension of the Christian One and the Many in exchange for some other philosophy.

This is not God's way. He acknowledges and commands both: mankind generically (the ONE) and man in particular (the Many). The individual or particular man is not allowed to disobey God's commands or be refused his ability to obey God's commands by others in the name of some common good. Nor is the individual allowed to disregard the composite of men and a proper desire for their good. What I mean is that anarchy (rebellng against God and other proper authority to become a law unto oneself) is equally detestable as tyranny<sup>40</sup>.

As your mind wrestles with the thought that God gave His mandates to mankind in general *and* all men in particular, consider a simple example. Take the fifth commandment of God's Law: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."<sup>41</sup> Surely, this commandment is given to all of God's people, yet it is not a generic command. God intends individuals and households to comply with it, as well as the nation, as well as the whole world of men. Further, it is not a command the State is allowed to nullify, for that would be ruinous.

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39 There is a sulfuric odor that lingers with this argument. It is the foul and compromised smell of Deism.

40 However, it is important to clarify, when someone disobeys an unjust law, it does not make him an anarchist. The person who disobeys the unjust law is actually attempting to promote justice (righteousness). His opposition to tyranny is an attempt to restore order and not an act of selfishness.

41 Exodus 20:12

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The Apostle Paul applies the good result of obeying the fifth commandment to particular people (Gentile Christians in Ephesus). He believed the command was for the whole of mankind but also to be obeyed by particular households.<sup>42</sup>

Think of it this way: Many trees make a forest, but a forest cannot erase the purpose of a tree. If you take from a tree its identity you lose the forest. You may find you have a field, or desert, or plain or something else, but the forest is gone. In the same way, we must never allow anyone to erase the purpose of a man, or you've lost humanity.

### **Has God Told Us There are Times a Ruler Should Interfere With His Commands?**

The short answer is, "No. He has not." All nations, peoples, churches, families – along with their rules and laws – should submit themselves whole-heartedly to God and His Law. We exist to fulfill His divine purposes. No person is autonomous,<sup>43</sup> and neither is any ruler.

Christianity was the main influencer to transform the old world from thinking the "King is Law" back again to the proper understanding that the "Law is King." The consequence has been the transformation of the Christian western world which saw a decline of dictatorship because of the renewed understanding that everyman is under the rule of law, including the king.<sup>44</sup>

Of course, the Bible has always taught that the king was to submit to God's Law the same as any other man, woman or child. A perfect example is provided in the story of wicked King Ahab. He coveted a vineyard near his palace in Jezreel. It was on land owned by Naboth, the Jezreelite. The king had no right to the vineyard. Further, since Naboth refused to sell it to the king, there was no legal recourse. The king would be breaking God's Law if he were to try to forcefully acquire it.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, Queen Jezebel's tyrannical heart beat strong. She concocted a plan to use the law against Naboth. False witnesses came forward to accuse Naboth of crimes against God and the State, for which he was subsequently executed. This left the land available and the king took possession of it.

We read this account and become disturbed. We think it is unfair and unjust. It is tyranny. And we are correct to think that way, for no governor has the right to mistreat a

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42 Ephesians 6:1-4

43 Autonomy is a word made of two Greek parts: auto=self and nomos=law. The idea that God wants men to create their own laws (self-law) in contradiction to His Law is absurd. All of the creature's rules and laws must be made in respect to God's Law. Whenever men make laws in contradiction to God's Law, it brings curse from God.

44 This was exemplified by the beheading of King Charles I in 1649. Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of England was one of the signatories of Charles death sentence. He was beheaded for treason.

45 See Leviticus 25, esp. Verses 13-17; Numbers 27; Joshua 13-21.

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citizen in order to impose his desires. Ahab certainly knew he was in the wrong. After all, Ahab knew that he, himself, was accountable to the Law of God. That is why Jezebel had to trump up false charges against Naboth, charges that Naboth broke the Law of God. The king and queen both knew that they answered to God's Law the same as their subjects. No one was above it. Even sojourners were protected by it.<sup>46</sup>

This is why the Hebrew kings were supposed to make a copy of the Law of God for themselves. It is the point of Leviticus 17:18-20. Speaking of the kings, Moses writes, "And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel."

The king was not to have a heart lifted up above his brothers. All answered to God together. All were required to submit to His Law. The king needed to keep a copy of the law to keep himself honest, and apply it equitably. He was not to turn aside from it to the right or to the left. This is what God expected. And He still expects it from all who hold office: civil and ecclesiastical.<sup>47</sup>

So then for a governing official in any country, region, or municipality to insist on a law or rule that is contrary and therefore opposes the standard God has set by Himself for all men, acts tyrannically.

I trust much of the argument makes sense to this point. I have tried to sweep clean the house, but there is a closet door that has not been opened. What I have said up to this point does not quite address the problem of local, national and worldwide disasters (which is part of the trigger for this paper.)

We know disasters tend to alter things. The normal everyday rhyme and rhythm often take a back seat to them. When your basement is flooded your plans for the day change. Fixing your house just became your first priority. And of course some disasters are much larger than others: floods, fires, tornados, drought, pestilences, etc. Let's call these what the insurance companies used to call them: Acts of God.

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<sup>46</sup> See Exodus 12:49; Leviticus 24:22; Numbers 9:14; Numbers 15:16.

<sup>47</sup> Ecclesiastical refers to church officers: elders.

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The question becomes, when we experience an *Act of God* does God give the civil magistrate the authority to suspend man's responsibility to obey His Edenic Design? In other words, if the government decides I should not go to work Monday through Saturday, nor worship with God's people on the Lord's Day because of a perceived "risk to public health," then should I, out of a duty to God, put aside the Fourth Commandment until the magistrate gives me permission to resume?<sup>48, 49</sup>

By no means! It may be proper for civil officials, church officers, parents, and individuals to voice concern for one another, but it gives none the power to enforce orders to prevent people from doing what God has created them to do.<sup>50</sup>

And although an urgent and temporary threat to the health of the population should concern all good people, including those holding positions of authority who may issue health and safety warnings, it remains the citizen's obligation, as God's creature, to discern the best way to obey Him. Each should consider the following: 1) Examine the legitimacy of the life-threat and take action to protect life as an individual. 2) Look to protect life in a way that God's order and commands can still be followed. 3) If God has imposed circumstances, by natural disaster,<sup>51</sup> war<sup>52</sup> or governmental edict,<sup>53</sup> which temporarily prevents us from walking within the bounds of His created order, then we pray<sup>54</sup> and take action in order to quickly overcome both and return proper order to society.

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48 The same question must also be directed against the church and family governments. Has God given them such authority to suspend men's responsibility to obey His design and commands?

49 This same question must be asked of forced mask wearing and vaccinations. (Again, this does not preclude the civil magistrate from quarantining for significant health risks based upon symptomatic signs.)

50 I have addressed the topic of Emergency Orders in a previous paper, *Are We Masking the Image of God in the Face of Man?* You can find it here: <https://defytyrants.com/are-we-masking-the-image-of-god-in-the-face-of-mancovid-19-an-un-anticipated-problem/>

51 See Genesis 41:56-42:3 "So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth. When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die." So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt."

52 See 2 Kings 25:1-25 where it describes Nebuchadnezzar's siege against Jerusalem and the severe famine that resulted.

53 See Exodus 1 and 2. The Hebrew people groaned as they were unable to live and work and worship according to God's order because of the tyranny of their Egyptian masters. They were sorely oppressed under harsh labor. They were required to kill their newborn children. They were slaves and not free men.

54 See 2 Chronicles 6. This is King Solomon's recipe. The people should pray and repent so that the LORD will restore things to their proper order.

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### **Magicians and Scientists**

The world is filled with nations, peoples, and governments who do not give heed to the God of the Bible. And these same people seek alternative ways to explain and control the world than the ways God has given us in His Word.

Historically, people and rulers have sought the guidance of shaman, priests, philosophers, gurus, prophets and the like. These are the preferred advisors, healers, and wise men, for a world who wish not to deal with the Christian Triune God. Men hope in these people to explain the world and control it.

Today, many believe that science and scientific methods explain away God and put the control in man's hands. We are regularly told, "Listen to the science." And so we begin to believe scientists can provide answers to understand those things we previously labeled acts of God.

Many scientists do not recognize concepts like sin, the Fall, and judgment. Neither do they admit ideas like obedience, blessing, and everlasting life. And yet these are today's magicians. These are the ones our governing officials turn to control things and give us explanations.

Yet science is, and always has been, limited to watching and measuring what God is doing. It cannot explain the world. And it can only control the things in the world as a secondary cause agent. It is not the primary cause of change. In other words, scientists and epidemiologists may try to watch, measure and contain the spread of some virus, but they cannot tell us why man is supposed to suffer from it. They cannot explain the reasons for its existence. And the scientific method does not turn to the Creator for such answers, because He is beyond measure and unfathomable. So science does not advise governing officials to encourage people to cry out to God and repent of their sins. Though this is the quickest route to changing any course of events.

God told Moses to take a wooden staff and Aaron and go back to Egypt to retrieve the Hebrew people. This meant they had to inform Pharaoh of God's demands. Pharaoh, for good reason, had a different plan. He thought differently about the world. He had his own experts. Pharaoh had no intention of allowing the Hebrews to leave.

Moses demonstrated God's power by turning the staff it into a snake. This proved nothing. Pharaoh called upon his experts, Jannes and Jambres.<sup>55</sup> They also had wooden

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<sup>55</sup> Exodus 7:8-13; 2 Timothy 3:8-9

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staffs. And they also turned them into snakes. So, for a time, the magicians provided Pharaoh with justification for defying God and tyrannizing the Hebrew people. The magicians provided a different explanation for the events Moses presented to the king. They controlled reality just as Moses did, only their way. But that time was short.

Worldly men will always find experts, scientific or otherwise, who can come up with reasons contrary to God's reasons for events. Further, there will always be a multitude who share a desire to disobey the commands of God.<sup>56</sup> Those who have no desire for God's things tend to support each other by their philosophical, political, social, and scientific arguments. But when people follow such advice it becomes truly injurious to human health. Since God has given us the limits and boundaries of His Law and Order for our good, it is only by following God's Law that we find life and health. To disobey God is to bring curses of all kinds<sup>57</sup> and death.

### **Men Unwittingly Comply With Satan**

Since the Garden of Eden, Satan has continually battled against man. Man is God's image-bearer and so he becomes Satan's enemy by his every resemblance. The Devil has endeavored to uproot the staples of our humanity as found in Eden. The snake was there, after all, and so has tried to mess things up from the start. The most pivotal battle occurred at the Incarnation as that Great Dragon sought to devour the Christ child – God's second Adam.<sup>58</sup>

Too often men give themselves unwittingly to Satan's cause and undermine God's stated purpose. Man ruins himself and others any time he acts as if he has the right to decide for himself his purpose. Remember, the devil likes to go undetected. He uses the unseeable to undo everything he can. He is wily. There is no question that he will use a crises, rooted in men's fear. In fact, by such crises he gives some men what they wait for: opportunity.<sup>59</sup> It's Machiavellian.<sup>60</sup> Opportunity to control. Opportunity to redefine.

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56 Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."

57 The curses listed in Deuteronomy 28:15-68 for disobeying God's Law are numerous and include pestilence or fatal epidemic disease; pandemic. Blessings are also listed, in Deuteronomy 28:1-14. These are God's provision when men live for Him as they were originally created to do.

58 The panoramic scene is presented by John in Revelation 12.

59 An example of this was Hilary Clinton, as Secretary of State under the Obama Administration, announcing to young Europeans at the European Parliament, "'Never waste a good crisis...Don't waste it when it can have a very positive impact on climate change and energy security.'" According to her worldview she believes a crisis induced opportunity for change is to be used as a tool for the advancement of the worldview in which you believe.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/clinton-never-waste-good-crisis-1638844.html>

60 This is in reference to the Italian philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli. His political treatise, The Prince, published in 1532, encouraged an *end justifies the means* tactical approach to politics.

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And so our challenges persist: to obey God and keep His commands. And to teach others to submit to Him as well. God is God. He owns everything. And He is boss. This has been our long existing need in western culture and in America. We need the Gospel and the Law of God again. We have lost our moorings. We need to repent and return to God. And it is hardly an issue of the last decade.

The question becomes whether we will respond to current challenges as Christians or as Secularists and Humanists and Scientific magicians. The most recent challenges are pandemics, societal rioting, government mandates, and rudderless confusion. These all point to the bankruptcy of Humanism more than the death of Christianity. They point to the breaking of God's Law rather than the keeping of it. And remember, there is no man, government, church elder, scientist, academician or angel that is allowed to usurp His authority or alter His commandments. None of these have the ability to change God's design for mankind and the created order.

So the proper response is for the Church to awaken from sleep and rise up to the challenges of our our day. When we do we will only be encouraged by how Christ will use us. There is no question that Jesus will awaken His Church to the seriousness of Her mission, it is only a question of when. For Christ's Church is the world's only hope and she will again teach and guide the nations.

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