

EBC – Adult Bible Study
“Spirit Empowered, Godly Living in an Ungodly World”
2019-2020

Living with the “Secular” and the “Sacred” together – Government’s purpose and responsibility.

V. Where Do We Get Our Understanding of Government contrasted with the people? – Part 2

Note: From the Declaration of Independence: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that **among these** are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men,

C. Between the Magna Carta and John Locke

1. The Magna Carta

- a. established limits on King John (limited government)
- b. promoted the belief that a Kings rule was not absolute
- c. provided a basis for the later development of Parliament

2. The Divine right of Kings

- a. Was practiced to some extent before the Magna Carta
- b. Was practiced to some extent before the Magna Carta
- c. As a political theory,
 - i. The **divine right** of kings, or **divine-right** theory of kingship, is a political and religious doctrine of royal and political legitimacy. It asserts that a monarch is subject to no earthly authority, deriving his **right** to rule directly from the will of God.
 - ii. Was practiced best by Henry VIII
 - Reigned 1509-1547
 - Declared himself the Supreme head of the Church of England
 - iii. Was further developed by James VI of Scotland 1567-1625
 - iv. Came to force in England Under his reign as James I 1603-1625

3. **THE PETITION OF RIGHT** (1628) extended the rights of "commoners" to have a voice in the government.

4. The Glorious Revolution also called the bloodless revolution (1688-1689)

- a. Involved the overthrow of the Catholic King James II
- b. Replaced with a Mary his daughter who was Protestant and her Dutch husband, William of Orange

5. The English Bill of Rights (1688) guaranteed free elections and rights for citizens accused of crime.

6. As the Protestant Reformation questions the practices of the Catholic Church
 - a. The printing press allows new ideas to spread quickly and easily
 - b. Philosophy is allowed to develop especially in the areas of individual liberty and equality
 - i. One of the first philosophes was **THOMAS HOBBS** who concluded in his famous book, *LEVIATHAN*, that people are incapable of ruling themselves, primarily because humans are naturally self-centered and quarrelsome and need the iron fist of a strong leader.
 - ii. Later philosophes, like **VOLTAIRE**, Montesquieu, and Rousseau were more optimistic about democracy.
 - encouraged the questioning of absolute monarchs, like the Bourbon family that ruled France.
 - Montesquieu suggested a separation of powers into branches of government

D. John Locke (1632-1704)

1. Trained in medicine
 - a. was a key advocate of the empirical approaches of the Scientific Revolution
 - i. knowledge was not the discovery of anything either innate or outside of the individual
 - ii. but the accumulation of “facts” derived from sensory experience
 - b. advanced a theory of the self as a blank page, with knowledge and identity arising only from accumulated experience
 - c. In his “Thoughts Concerning Education” (1693), **Locke** argued for a broadened syllabus and better treatment of students
2. English philosopher and political theorist and a Writer
 - a. Essay Concerning Human Understanding” (1689) outlined the above
 - b. The “Two Treatises of Government” (1690) offered theories redefining the nature of government
 - i. Rejecting the divine right of kings,
 - Though he agreed with Hobbs about the selfish nature of man, he was optimistic about their ability to use reason and avoid tyranny
 - societies form governments by mutual agreement.
 - the natural rights of individuals limited the power of the king. The king did not hold absolute power
 - a ruler gains authority through the consent of the governed
 - ii. The Purpose of government is to protect the natural rights of the people
 - in his 1690 “Second Treatise of Government,” he wrote, “Men being, as has been said, by nature, all free, equal and independent, no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent.”

- all individuals are equal in the sense that they are born with certain "inalienable" natural rights. That is, rights that are God-given and can never be taken or even given away.
 - in the **state of nature** all men are free "to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of **nature**
- Among these fundamental natural rights, are "life, liberty, and property."
 - He also believed that the most basic human law of nature is the preservation of mankind. To serve that purpose, he reasoned, individuals have both a right and a duty to preserve their own lives.
 - Murderers, however, forfeit their right to life since they act outside the law of reason.
 - He also argued that individuals should be free to make choices about how to conduct their own lives as long as they do not interfere with the liberty of others, therefore liberty should be far-reaching.
 - By "property," he meant more than land and goods that could be sold, given away, or even confiscated by the government under certain circumstances.
 - Property also referred to ownership of one's self, which included a right to personal well-being.
 - He and others had used pursuit of happiness to describe freedom of opportunity as well as the duty to help those in want.
 - he says individuals have a duty to respect the property (and lives and liberties) of others even in the state of **nature**, a duty he traces to **natural law**.
 - **Natural law** and **natural rights** coexist, but **natural law** is primary, commanding respect for the **rights** of others.
- The purpose of government, Locke wrote, is to secure and protect the God-given inalienable natural rights of the people.
 - this system of thought that men developed to support and defend it became **known as liberalism**
 - For their part, the people must obey the laws of their rulers.
 - Thus, a sort of social contract exists between the rulers and the ruled.
 - **Social contract** theory says that people live together in society in accordance with an agreement that establishes moral and political rules of behavior.
- Locke favored a representative government such as the English Parliament, which had a hereditary House of Lords and an elected House of Commons.
 - But he wanted representatives to be only men of property and business.
 - Consequently, only adult male property owners should -have the right to vote.
 - Locke was reluctant to allow the propertyless masses of people to participate in government because he believed that they were unfit.

- But, Locke concluded, if a government persecutes its people with "a long train of abuses" over an extended period, the people have the right to resist that government, alter or abolish it, and create a new political system.
 - o Consider his fourth unalienable right – self preservation
 - o What are the abuses? or what does an unjust law is no law at all mean?
 - Lex iniusta non est lex (English: An **unjust law is no law at all**), is a standard legal maxim. Originating with St. Augustine, the motto was used by St. Thomas Aquinas and quoted by Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement to describe racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans.
3. Biblical Basis for some of these thoughts
- a. The Divine right of Kings
 - i. Ro 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-14 – appointed by God
 - ii. It asserts that a monarch is subject to no earthly authority
 - Uzziah - 2 Chr 26:18-19
 - David numbering the people – 2 Sam 24
 - What is the purpose of counselors? Pr 11:14; 15:22; 24:6
 - b. The Equality of man
 - i. The 10 commandments – Ex 20:12-17
 - ii. Love your neighbor as yourself – Lev 19:18; Mt 19:19; 22:39; Mk 12:31; Lk 10:27; Ro 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8
 - c. Governments purpose to protect the people – Ro 13:4; 1 Pe 2:14
 - i. The King was to write his own copy of the law – De 17:18
 - ii. The King was to read it daily so that he did not to think of himself as higher than his people and go astray from God’s design – De 18:19-20
 - iii. Principle: The King needs to know the condition of His people – Pr 27:23-27
 - d. Property ownership
 - i. Principle of dominion – Ge 1:26 – Stewardship
 - ii. Recognition of ownership of property – Ge 23
 - iii. Don’t move land marks – De 19:14; 27:17; Job 24:2; Pr 22:28; Ho 5:10
 - e. Self-defense, preservation
 - i. Cities of refuge – De 19:2-13
 - ii. Death of a thief breaking into a home – Ex 22:2; Mt 24:43
 - f. What about changing government
 - i. Joab’s rebuke of David after Absalom’s death – 2 Sam 19:5-8
 - ii. Ac 17:26 "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,