

The St. Peter Option: To Everyone an Answer Living as Exiles in a Foreign Land

1 Peter, 2 Peter, Christian Vocation, and the Table of Duties

14 Human Tyranny VS. Christian Freedom

Introduction—Our freedom as Christians is found in Christ

The Apostle Peter not only emphasizes our pilgrimage through a world of tyrannical oppression, but he emphasizes that our freedom is found in faith. Our citizenship is in heaven. The end of our faith is the salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:3-9). Christ's forgiveness, that we are righteous for Jesus' sake, is our true and eternal freedom. By faith in Christ's redemption, our conscience lives in absolute freedom from sin, oppression, tyranny, bondage, and judgment. "A Mighty Fortress—And take they our life, goods, fame, child, and wife; they yet have nothing won. The kingdom ours remaineth."

Tyranny- "1. Arbitrary or despotic exercise of power; the exercise of power over subjects and others with a rigor not authorized by law or justice or not requisite for the purposes of government. 2. Cruel government or discipline; as, the tyranny of a master. 3. Severity; rigor; inclemency; unseemly; harshness."

Tyrant- "Any tyrannical power or influence; any force impelling, restraining, or overruling against one's wishes..." (Websters Universal Unabridged Dictionary, 1937)

Tyranny sets aside the proper use of Law to Curb absolute power and control in civil affairs.

Tyrannical Regimes—totalitarianism

Nazi fascism – Its beginnings in the early part of the 20th century

Fascism comes from the Latin word *fasces*, which was a tight bundle of wooden rods which included a protruding axe blade. In Ancient Rome, the officers attending the magistrates would hold the *fasces* as a symbol of the penal power of their magistrate. The Italian fascist, Benito Mussolini, adopted this symbol to recall the greatness of the Roman Empire (the absolute power of the emperor) and to reinforce his authority as dictator of Italy. A common characteristic of fascism is that all citizens were to be totally unified around the tyrannical ideology (like this "tightly bound fasces") and to relinquish all personal autonomy. All were to serve the state and submit to the power of the dictator for the good of the nation. Adolf Hitler was the *furher* (*the supreme leader-an oppressive god*). *His command was law.*

Communism - In varying forms throughout the 20th century, notable individuals: Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong, Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, Leon Trotsky

Communism comes from the Latin word *communis*, which means "shared" or "common", but it should not be confused with a word like *communion* (which is rooted in the giving and receiving of love without the loss of the individual person, e.g., Acts 2 and the sharing of all things in common). In communism the human person is subjugated to the common good. (Ideas of this sort stretch back to the utopian ideals set forth in Plato's Republic). Communism is a political and economic doctrine that strips the individual of private property and replaces a profit-based economy with public ownership and communal control of the means of production and the resources of a society. Communism strove for a utopian society in which there would no longer be the economically "oppressed" by the "oppressor" but one in which everyone was the same, all worked together for the common good, and individual and personhood was obliterated. (See Critical Race Theory and Wokism today which is social Marxism.)

Our St. Peter Option Study has been highlighting Human Tyranny

- Critical Race Theory and Woke Ideology
- Radical Environmentalism
- LGBTQ ideology

The Egyptian Dynasty that Enslaved Israel

Their desire to return to Egypt, rather than live in the freedom of the Lord's redemption, is illustrative of the tendency since the fall to gravitate toward a willingness to tyrannize (the force of law is an end in itself) or to be enslaved (to submit to tyranny out of fear)

True freedom is not a matter of revolution and insurrection (this is an attempt to secure freedom by the coercive force of law and control, which results in simply a new form of tyranny), but rather a freedom of conscience that lives by faith in Christ and His righteousness.

Further Word on the Function of Law in Society or the Home -

Fourth Commandment Authority is NOT to control and subjugate, but to serve. Governments do not possess 4th Commandment Authority to oppress, but to protect and serve. Parents and teachers do not possess 4th Commandment Authority to tyrannize their children, but to guide and nurture them. This is so because God's authority (which the Law describes) is rooted in His nature of self-giving love which protects, cares for, gives life, nurtures, etc. In the Christian worldview, those who possess 4th Commandment authority do not do so to be served but to serve. (This is a radical point of view that is rooted in the Gospel of Christian love.)

Christian Freedom

1. Government has a proper role, under God (Left hand kingdom/Secular Authority) to protect the dignity of the human person and the fundamental human rights which enable us to live with each other in marriage, family, and community. (Natural Law is to be supported by Government as servant protecting God's gifts of life, marriage, property, truth, and due process or justice under the 8th Commandment). In the United States, the citizenry is a part of the left-hand government in the responsibilities we have been given under the Constitution (Freedom of Speech, Right to Assemble, The Right to Redress, and the electoral process).
2. Christians and the Church (Right hand kingdom/Spiritual kingdom) do not engage in insurrection and rebellion against tyranny.
3. Christians and the Church remain true to our confession of faith in Christ under oppression. We yield in every way, but never in a way that denies our faith in Christ.
4. Suffering Persecution under tyranny and in love for our enemies is one of the central ways in which we bear witness to Christ.
5. **The Justification of the Sinner Before God is our ultimate Freedom**
6. Quotations from Luther's great Treatise, "The Freedom of a Christian"