


# A PRELUDE TO *BIBLICAL* EVANGELISM





THE FRUIT OF  
THE RIGHTEOUS IS A  
TREE OF LIFE,  
AND HE WHO IS WISE  
WINS SOULS.

PROVERBS 11:30 NASB



# PRINCIPLES FOR BIBLICAL *EVANGELISM* FOUND IN JOHN 4, “THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.”

TAKE

- TAKE THE INITIATIVE! JN. 4:6-9

OFFER

- OFFER GOD’S MERCY! JN. 4:10-14

IDENTIFY

- IDENTIFY SPIRITUAL NEEDS! JN. 4:9-10

CONFRONT

- CONFRONT SIN JN! 4:16-18

REJECT

- REJECT FALSE WORSHIP! JN. 4:19-24

REVEAL

- REVEAL CHRIST! JN. 4:25-26

# CHAOS, CORRUPTION, AND THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE






1. UPENDING GOD'S LAW
2. THE *HEART* OF THE PROBLEM IS THE *HEART*!
3. COMPREHENSIVE CORRUPTION
4. THE *HIGH COST* OF *REJECTING* GOD
5. *REJECTING* GOD'S RESTRAINTS
  - A. THE *CONSCIENCE*

# THE *FAMILY*

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- ***THE FAMILY IS ONE OF THOSE RESTRAINTS***. Of course, the Bible instructs Christian parents to raise their children ***“IN THE DISCIPLINE AND INSTRUCTION OF THE LORD”*** (EPH. 6:4).
- But even ***unbelieving parents*** have a restraining influence in the lives of their children. In that sense, the family is a ***DIVINELY CREATED INSTITUTION*** for the formation of restrained sinners, who—through generations of ***MORALITY, DISCIPLINE, LOVE, VIRTUE***, and ***OBEDIENCE***—become a ***benefit*** to society and enjoy God’s gifts with gratitude.

- What we've seen in recent years is a **COMPREHENSIVE ASSAULT** on **GOD'S DESIGN FOR THE FAMILY**, and the subsequent short-circuiting of its restraining effect.
- Between the **FEMINIST MOVEMENT'S SUBVERSION** of **MALE LEADERSHIP**, the **EXPLOSION** of **DIVORCE RATES**, and the **WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION** of **GENDER** and **SEXUALITY**, there's significant **CONFUSION** about what actually constitutes a family, let alone how it should function.
- When you consider the number of children born **without both** a mother and father in the home, combined with those who have lost that privilege through **divorce**, you can see why the family isn't doing much to **RESTRAIN SIN** and its effects in society today.
- **THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY SHATTERS GOD'S DESIGN FOR ADMINISTERING THE LOVE, DISCIPLINE, AND DIRECTION THAT LITTLE LIVES SO DESPERATELY NEED.**

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- Today we see generations of young people who were **never taught** to **RESPECT** and **SUBMIT** to authority, or to take **RESPONSIBILITY** for their actions and face the **CONSEQUENCES**. The Bible tells us, “**HE WHO WITHHOLDS HIS ROD HATES HIS SON, BUT HE WHO LOVES HIM DISCIPLINES HIM DILIGENTLY**” (PROV. 13:24).
  - Parents are meant to be **a threat** to **unruly, disobedient** behavior—they’re meant to rein in their children and teach them how to live and function as productive members of society. **TODAY WE’RE SEEING THE MAYHEM THAT’S UNLEASHED WHEN THE RESTRAINT OF FAMILY FAILS.**
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# THE *GOVERNMENT*

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In those instances, ***GOD HAS ESTABLISHED A SEPARATE AUTHORITY TO RESTRAIN SIN.*** We can think of the ***CONSCIENCE*** as a kind of ***PERSONAL AUTHORITY***, while the family represents ***PARENTAL AUTHORITY***.

***GOD HAS LIKEWISE ESTABLISHED THE GOVERNMENT AS A SOCIETAL AUTHORITY.*** The prime role of government is not material welfare—rather, as ***PAUL*** describes,

***IT IS DIVINELY APPOINTED TO BEAR THE SWORD.***



***EVERY PERSON IS TO BE IN SUBJECTION TO THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR THERE IS NO AUTHORITY EXCEPT FROM GOD, AND THOSE WHICH EXIST ARE ESTABLISHED BY GOD. 2, THEREFORE, WHOEVER RESISTS AUTHORITY HAS OPPOSED THE ORDINANCE OF GOD; AND THEY WHO HAVE OPPOSED WILL RECEIVE CONDEMNATION UPON THEMSELVES. 3, FOR RULERS ARE NOT A CAUSE OF FEAR FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR, BUT FOR EVIL. DO YOU WANT TO HAVE NO FEAR OF AUTHORITY? DO WHAT IS GOOD AND YOU WILL HAVE PRAISE FROM THE SAME; 4, FOR IT IS A MINISTER OF GOD TO YOU FOR GOOD. BUT IF YOU DO WHAT IS EVIL, BE AFRAID; FOR IT DOES NOT BEAR THE SWORD FOR NOTHING; FOR IT IS A MINISTER OF GOD, AN AVENGER WHO BRINGS WRATH ON THE ONE WHO PRACTICES EVIL. 5, THEREFORE, IT IS NECESSARY TO BE IN SUBJECTION, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF WRATH, BUT ALSO FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE."*** (ROM. 13:1–5)

- GOD USES **IMPERFECT** MEANS TO RESTRAIN SIN. NOBODY'S CONSCIENCE IS PERFECTLY INFORMED AND ALWAYS ACCURATE—NO FAMILY IS PERFECT, EITHER.
- In the same way, God uses imperfect human governments—and imperfect agents of those governments—to hold back the chaos and corruption of sin. **IMPERFECT THOUGH THEY MAY BE, CIVIL AUTHORITIES WERE ORDAINED BY GOD, AND ANYONE WHO OPPOSES THEM OPPOSES HIM.**

# THE *CHURCH*

There is one more restraint God has placed in society—THE *CHURCH* FUNCTIONS AS ITS *SPIRITUAL* AUTHORITY. God has called His people to be a righteous and sanctifying influence in this world. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ said,

***“YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH; BUT IF THE SALT HAS BECOME TASTELESS, HOW CAN IT BE MADE SALTY AGAIN? IT IS NO LONGER GOOD FOR ANYTHING, EXCEPT TO BE THROWN OUT AND TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT BY MEN. YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. A CITY SET ON A HILL CANNOT BE HIDDEN; NOR DOES ANYONE LIGHT A LAMP AND PUT IT UNDER A BASKET, BUT ON THE LAMPSTAND, AND IT GIVES LIGHT TO ALL WHO ARE IN THE HOUSE. LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN.”***

**(MATT. 5:13–16)**

- We understand the **effects** of **sin**—how it has corrupted God’s creation and set it on a destructive trajectory. We understand the world is dark and decaying. But the Lord has established His church as the last line of restraint against sin’s influence. **WE ARE THE SALT THAT SLOWS THE DECAY AND THE LIGHT THAT DIMINISHES THE DARKNESS.**
- Through our Christlike influence—through our **LOVE, MERCY, HUMILITY, KINDNESS, COMPASSION**, and **HOLINESS**—we’re called to restrain the corruption and chaos of sin. In that regard, the church is the most precious commodity in the world.
- However, just as **CHRIST WARNED**, the effects of salt and light can be diminished. **SALT** can become impure and lose its taste. **LIGHT** can be covered up and hidden. **THE TRAGEDY TODAY IS THAT SO MANY CHURCHES HAVE FAILED TO BE A PRESERVING, ILLUMINATING INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD.**

***False teachers*** abound—charlatans promoting religious Ponzi schemes and selling phony miracles. ***Unholy*** and ***immoral leaders*** tarnish the church's testimony. ***Worldly entertainments*** dominate, while ***hard truths*** are dulled or dismissed altogether. Whole ***denominations*** deny the authority, sufficiency, and inerrancy of Scripture. Others deny the deity of Christ. ***TOO MANY CHURCHES DON'T CONFRONT SIN, DON'T CALL FOR HOLY LIVING, AND DON'T UPHOLD THE GOSPEL AS THE ONLY HOPE FOR SALVATION. WHAT KIND OF RESTRAINT CAN A CHURCH LIKE THAT PROVIDE?***

We need to recognize the correlation between the state of the world and the state of the church. A weak, worldly, false church has no ability to restrain the chaos and corruption of this world. A church like that actually contributes to the problem.

***GOD'S PEOPLE NEED TO BE DIFFERENT. WE NEED TO BE SALT AND LIGHT, AND LIVE HOLY LIVES THAT GLORIFY THE LORD AND ADORN HIS GOSPEL.***



## *LOVE* AND *FULFILLING* THE LAW

- *WHAT DOES A **HOLY, GOD-HONORING** LIFE LOOK LIKE?*
- To answer that question, we need to consider one particular altercation between *JESUS* and the *PHARISEES*.
- *MATTHEW* records one of the religious leaders attempting to trap the Lord with a trick question. ***“TEACHER, WHICH IS THE GREAT COMMANDMENT IN THE LAW?”*** (MATT. 22:36). It seems their plan was to pin Him down on one of the hundreds of *ceremonial laws* and *rituals* they had heaped on the people of Israel, only to contest whatever He said. ***THEY BELIEVED THEY POSSESSED THE SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S LAW. THEY WERE WRONG.***

**JESUS** replied with a quote from the **MOSAIC LAW**. **“‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ THIS IS THE GREAT AND FOREMOST COMMANDMENT”** (MATT. 22:37–38).

He was quoting from **(DEUT. 6:4–9)** (specifically **verse 5**), a key passage of the law that links love for God with obedience, and which also figured prominently in the customs and ceremonies the Pharisees had instituted. Once again, He was contrasting the emptiness of their pious rituals with the comprehensive, full-orbed love God commands from His people.

But **CHRIST** doesn’t stop there. He says, **“THE SECOND IS LIKE IT, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF’”** (MATT. 22:39). Again, He’s pointing back to the **Mosaic law**—this time, to **LEVITICUS 19** and God’s commands regarding the way His people were supposed to behave toward one another, and to strangers.

- ***“NOW WHEN YOU REAP THE HARVEST OF YOUR LAND, YOU SHALL NOT REAP TO THE VERY CORNERS OF YOUR FIELD, NOR SHALL YOU GATHER THE GLEANINGS OF YOUR HARVEST. NOR SHALL YOU GLEAN YOUR VINEYARD, NOR SHALL YOU GATHER THE FALLEN FRUIT OF YOUR VINEYARD; YOU SHALL LEAVE THEM FOR THE NEEDY AND FOR THE STRANGER. I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD. YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, NOR DEAL FALSELY, NOR LIE TO ONE ANOTHER. YOU SHALL NOT SWEAR FALSELY BY MY NAME, SO AS TO PROFANE THE NAME OF YOUR GOD; I AM THE LORD. YOU SHALL NOT OPPRESS YOUR NEIGHBOR, NOR ROB HIM. THE WAGES OF A HIRED MAN ARE NOT TO REMAIN WITH YOU ALL NIGHT UNTIL MORNING. YOU SHALL NOT CURSE A DEAF MAN, NOR PLACE A STUMBLING BLOCK BEFORE THE BLIND, BUT YOU SHALL REVERE YOUR GOD; I AM THE LORD. YOU SHALL DO NO INJUSTICE IN JUDGMENT; YOU SHALL NOT BE PARTIAL TO THE POOR NOR DEFER TO THE GREAT, BUT YOU ARE TO JUDGE YOUR NEIGHBOR FAIRLY. YOU SHALL NOT GO ABOUT AS A SLANDERER AMONG YOUR PEOPLE, AND YOU ARE NOT TO ACT AGAINST THE LIFE OF YOUR NEIGHBOR; I AM THE LORD.*”**

***YOU SHALL NOT HATE YOUR FELLOW COUNTRYMAN IN YOUR HEART; YOU MAY SURELY REPROVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, BUT SHALL NOT INCUR SIN BECAUSE OF HIM. YOU SHALL NOT TAKE VENGEANCE, NOR BEAR ANY GRUDGE AGAINST THE SONS OF YOUR PEOPLE, BUT YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF; I AM THE LORD. . . . WHEN A STRANGER RESIDES WITH YOU IN YOUR LAND, YOU SHALL NOT DO HIM WRONG. THE STRANGER WHO RESIDES WITH YOU SHALL BE TO YOU AS THE NATIVE AMONG YOU, AND YOU SHALL LOVE HIM AS YOURSELF, FOR YOU WERE ALIENS IN THE LAND OF EGYPT; I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD. YOU SHALL DO NO WRONG IN JUDGMENT, IN MEASUREMENT OF WEIGHT, OR CAPACITY. YOU SHALL HAVE JUST BALANCES, JUST WEIGHTS, A JUST EPHAH, AND A JUST HIN; I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT. YOU SHALL THUS OBSERVE ALL MY STATUTES AND ALL MY ORDINANCES AND DO THEM; I AM THE LORD.” (LEVITICUS 19:9–18, 33–37)***