

5 Universal Principles of Law and the Rule of Law

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1. The Written Law of God as Foundation of Law. The LORD God gave His Law to Moses between 1450 and 1410 BC, which he recorded in the first five books of the Bible (the Pentateuch). God gave His Law directly to reveal His will for people to be able to live in right relationship to Him and to other people, and to provide a just system of government and law for the nation of Israel. Evidence of principles of the same Law are found in every code of laws because they reflect, though imperfectly, the Law of God written on every human heart (Romans 1:19; 2:15). Every person knows it is wrong to lie, steal, murder, rape, or commit adultery. Knowledge of the Bible led to a better understanding of the purposes, principles, and limitations of civil government and law (see “7 Universal Principles of Civil Government”).

2. Just Law Complies with the Law of God and is Fixed, Uniform, and Universal. The Law of God is distinct from human laws. Human laws are imperfect, often contradictory, and sometimes authorize evil, such as abortion. “The Law of the LORD is perfect” (Psalm 19:7), absolutely righteous, just, and good, with not a single unrighteous, unjust, imperfect, or evil provision. Dr. Herbert W. Titus, JD, concluded: “Law, to be called Law must be unchanging, that is, fixed, uniform, and universal, not relative to time, person or situation, or place.” And Dr. Michael V. Hernandez, JD, said, “Human laws must reflect these characteristics of God’s law in order to be valid.” *Scriptures:* Exodus 20:1-17; 2 Chronicles 17:9; Nehemiah 8:1-8; 9:1-3.

3. Just Law Establishes Fixed Standards of Right and Wrong. The Law of God is His standard of righteousness and justice, defining with absolute authority what is good or evil, right or wrong, true or false, just or unjust. Thus, every provision of law is a moral judgment. Further, every provision of law is discriminatory based on principle, not on persons—that is, what the law prohibits and punishes as wrong is wrong for every person, without distinction. Just laws and judicial judgments apply equally to citizens and rulers, to poor and wealthy (Leviticus 19:15).

4. Human Laws Must Be Consistent with Conscience to Ensure Respect. When human laws are consistent with the Law of God, they are consistent with a rightly-informed conscience (Hebrews 8:10; 10:16), thus giving citizens the opportunity to live freely with a clean conscience before God and in obedience to civil laws. When the civil laws (or religious doctrines or policies) contradict the Law of God, this creates internal conflict, requiring people to choose between obeying God or human rulers (Daniel 3; 6; Acts 4:1-31; 5:17-42).

5. A Foremost Purpose of the Law is to Protect Human Life. Through creation and the Bible, God has revealed Himself as the Creator of mankind and of every baby in his mother’s womb (see “7 Truths about the Sanctity of Human Life”). Consequently, the right to life is the first and foremost unalienable human right (see “7 Universal Principles of Human Rights”). When God authorized civil government, He specifically did so to protect innocent human life and establish justice (see “7 Universal Principles of Civil Government”). These purposes are accomplished through making, complying with, and enforcing just laws, such as, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). Therefore, *a foremost purpose of law is to protect human life!*

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