

Message Two

Living a Christian Life under the Government of God

JL Hymns: 21, 713

Scripture Reading: 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:21-24; 4:17-19; 5:6

- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
- 1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
- 1 Pet 2:22 Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth;
- 1 Pet 2:23 Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;
- 1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.
- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
- 1 Pet 4:18 And if the righteous man is saved only with difficulty, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?
- 1 Pet 4:19 So then let those also who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing to a faithful Creator.
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,

I. The Epistles of 1 and 2 Peter are on the universal government of God:

- A. The subject of 1 Peter is the Christian life under the government of God, showing us the government of God especially in His dealings with His chosen people—1:2.
- 1 Pet 1:2 Chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.
- B. The subject of 2 Peter is the divine provision and the divine government, showing us that as God is governing us, He supplies us with whatever we need—1:1-4; 3:13.
- 2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
- 2 Pet 1:2 Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;
- 2 Pet 1:3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,
- 2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
- 2 Pet 3:13 But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
- C. God governs by judging; the judgment of God is for the carrying out of His government—1 Pet. 1:17; 4:17:
- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
1. Because 1 and 2 Peter are concerned with the government of God, in these Epistles the judgment of God and of the Lord is referred to repeatedly as one of the essential items—1 Pet. 2:23; 4:5-6, 17; 2 Pet. 2:3-4, 9; 3:7.
- 1 Pet 2:23 Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;
- 1 Pet 4:5 Who will render an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
- 1 Pet 4:6 For unto this end the gospel was announced also to those who are now dead, that they might be judged in the flesh according to men but live in the spirit according to God.

- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
- 2 Pet 2:3 And in covetousness, with fabricated words, they will make merchandise of you, for whom the judgment of old is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber.
- 2 Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned but delivered them to gloomy pits, having cast them down to Tartarus, they being kept for judgment;
- 2 Pet 2:9 The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of trial and how to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,
- 2 Pet 3:7 But the heavens and the earth now, by the same word, have been stored up for fire, being kept unto the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.
2. Through various kinds of judgments, the Lord God will clear up the entire universe and purify it so that He may have a new heaven and a new earth for a new universe filled with His righteousness for His delight—v. 13.
- 2 Pet 3:13 But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
- D. The judgment in 1 Peter 1:17, which is carried out by the Father, is not the future judgment but is the present, daily judgment of God's governmental dealings with His children:
- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
1. The Father has regenerated us to produce a holy family—a holy Father with holy children—vv. 3, 15, 17.
- 1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- 1 Pet 1:15 But according to the Holy One who called you, you yourselves also be holy in all your manner of life;
- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
2. As holy children, we should walk in a holy manner of life (vv. 15-16); otherwise, in His government God the Father will become the Judge and will deal with our unholiness (4:15-17; Heb. 12:9-10).
- 1 Pet 1:15 But according to the Holy One who called you, you yourselves also be holy in all your manner of life;
- 1 Pet 1:16 Because it is written, "You shall be holy because I am holy."
- 1 Pet 4:15 For let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler into others' affairs;
- 1 Pet 4:16 But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name.
- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
- Heb 12:9 Furthermore we have had the fathers of our flesh as discipliners and we respected them; shall we not much more be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?
- Heb 12:10 For they disciplined for a few days as it seemed good to them; but He, for what is profitable that we might partake of His holiness.
- E. The disciplinary judgment in the government of God begins from the house of God—1 Pet. 4:17:
- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
1. God judges everything that does not match His government; therefore, in this age we, the children of God, are under the daily judgment of God—1:17.
- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
2. God uses fiery ordeals to deal with the believers in the judgment of His governmental administration, which begins from His own house—4:12, 17.
- 1 Pet 4:12 Beloved, do not think that the fiery ordeal among you, coming to you for a trial, is strange, as if it were a strange thing happening to you;

- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
3. The purpose of this judgment is that we would live according to God in the spirit—v. 6.
- 1 Pet 4:6 For unto this end the gospel was announced also to those who are now dead, that they might be judged in the flesh according to men but live in the spirit according to God.

II. The preciousness of Peter's writings is that he combines the Christian life and God's government, revealing that the Christian life and the government of God go together as a pair—1 Pet. 1:17; 2:21, 24; 3:15; 4:17; 5:5-8:

- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
- 1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
- 1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.
- 1 Pet 3:15 But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, being always ready for a defense to everyone who asks of you an account concerning the hope which is in you,
- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
- 1 Pet 5:5 In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
- 1 Pet 5:7 Casting all your anxiety on Him because it matters to Him concerning you.
- 1 Pet 5:8 Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour.
- A. The Triune God has passed through a long process in Christ and has become the life-giving Spirit to indwell us; this is for our Christian life—John 1:14; 14:17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- B. At the same time, the Triune God is still the Creator of the universe and its Ruler—1 Pet. 4:19.
- 1 Pet 4:19 So then let those also who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing to a faithful Creator.
- C. Although we have been born of God to have a spiritual life and to be a new creation, we are still in the old creation—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6; 2 Cor. 5:17:
- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
- John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
- John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- 2 Cor 5:17 So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.
1. For this reason, we need God's governmental dealings—1 Pet. 1:17.
- 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,

2. In order for the Christian life to grow, we need the discipline of God's government—2:2; 4:17; 2 Pet. 1:5-7.
 - 1 Pet 2:2 As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation,
 - 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
 - 2 Pet 1:5 And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;
 - 2 Pet 1:6 And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;
 - 2 Pet 1:7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.

III. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He lived a human life that was absolutely under the government of God, and He committed everything related to Him to God's government—John 6:38; 1 Pet. 2:21-23:

- John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
- 1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
- 1 Pet 2:22 Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth;
- 1 Pet 2:23 Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;
- A. The Lord kept committing all His insults and injuries to Him who judges righteously in His government, the righteous God, to whom He submitted Himself; He put His trust in this righteous One, recognizing His government—v. 23.
 - 1 Pet 2:23 Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;
- B. When God counseled Christ as a man, Christ's inward parts were one with God and instructed Him through His contact with God—Psa. 16:7; Isa. 50:4.
 - Psa 16:7 I will bless Jehovah, who counsels me; / Indeed in the nights my inward parts instruct me.
 - Isa 50:4 The Lord Jehovah has given me / The tongue of the instructed, / That I should know how to sustain the weary with a word. / He awakens me morning by morning; / He awakens my ear / To hear as an instructed one.

IV. As believers in Christ and children of God, we should live a Christian life under the government of God—John 3:15; 1:12-13; 1 Pet. 4:13-19; 5:6-8:

- John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.
- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
- John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 1 Pet 4:13 But inasmuch as you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice exultingly.
- 1 Pet 4:14 If you are reproached in the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.
- 1 Pet 4:15 For let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler into others' affairs;
- 1 Pet 4:16 But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name.
- 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
- 1 Pet 4:18 And if the righteous man is saved only with difficulty, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?
- 1 Pet 4:19 So then let those also who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing to a faithful Creator.
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
- 1 Pet 5:7 Casting all your anxiety on Him because it matters to Him concerning you.
- 1 Pet 5:8 Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour.

- A. The Epistles of Peter reveal the Christ who enables us to take God's governmental dealings administered through sufferings—1 Pet. 1:6-8; 2:3-4, 19, 21-25; 3:18, 22; 4:1, 15-16; 5:8-9.
- 1 Pet 1:6 In which time you exult, though for a little while at present, if it must be, you have been made sorrowful by various trials,
 - 1 Pet 1:7 So that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
 - 1 Pet 1:8 Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory,
 - 1 Pet 2:3 If you have tasted that the Lord is good.
 - 1 Pet 2:4 Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected by men but with God chosen and precious,
 - 1 Pet 2:19 For this is grace, if anyone, because of a consciousness of God, bears sorrows by suffering unjustly.
 - 1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
 - 1 Pet 2:22 Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth;
 - 1 Pet 2:23 Who being reviled did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;
 - 1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.
 - 1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
 - 1 Pet 3:18 For Christ also has suffered once for sins, the Righteous on behalf of the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, on the one hand being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in the spirit;
 - 1 Pet 3:22 Who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being subjected to Him.
 - 1 Pet 4:1 Since Christ therefore has suffered in the flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same mind (because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin),
 - 1 Pet 4:15 For let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler into others' affairs;
 - 1 Pet 4:16 But if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name.
 - 1 Pet 5:8 Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour.
 - 1 Pet 5:9 Him withstand, being firm in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being accomplished among your brotherhood in the world.
- B. We should pass the time of our sojourning in holy fear, that is, in a healthy, serious caution that leads us to be holy in all our manner of life—1:15, 17.
- 1 Pet 1:15 But according to the Holy One who called you, you yourselves also be holy in all your manner of life;
 - 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
- C. We should be humbled under the mighty hand of God, which carries out the government of God—5:6:
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
1. In verse 6 *the mighty hand of God* refers to God's administrating hand seen especially in His judgment—1:17; 4:17.
 - 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
 - 1 Pet 1:17 And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear,
 - 1 Pet 4:17 For it is time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if first from us, what will be the end of those who disobey the gospel of God?
 2. To be humbled under God's mighty hand is to be made humble by God; however, we must cooperate with God's operation and be willing to be made humble, lowly, under

His mighty hand—5:6.

1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,

D. We should commit our souls to the faithful Creator—4:19:

1 Pet 4:19 So then let those also who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in well-doing to a faithful Creator.

1. God can preserve our soul, and His loving and faithful care accompanies His justice in His governmental administration.
2. While God judges us in His government, He cares for us faithfully in His love; as we are suffering His disciplinary judgment, we should commit our souls to the faithful care of our Creator—Matt. 10:28; 11:28-29.

Matt 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

E. In the death of Christ we have died to sins so that in the resurrection of Christ we might live to righteousness under God's government—1 Pet. 2:24:

1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.

1. God's government is established upon righteousness (Psa. 89:14a); as God's people living under His government, we must live a righteous life.

Psa 89:14a Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; ...

2. The expression *live to righteousness* is related to the fulfilling of God's governmental requirements—1 Pet. 2:24:

1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.

- a. We were saved so that we might live rightly under the government of God, that is, in a way that matches the righteous requirements of His government.
- b. In Christ's death we have been separated from sins, and in His resurrection we have been enlivened so that in our Christian life we might live spontaneously to righteousness under the government of God—Rom. 6:8, 10-11, 18; Eph. 2:6; John 14:19; 2 Tim. 2:11.

Rom 6:8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him,

Rom 6:10 For the death which He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life which He lives, He lives to God.

Rom 6:11 So also you, reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but living to God in Christ Jesus.

Rom 6:18 And having been freed from sin, you were enslaved to righteousness.

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

John 14:19 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live.

2 Tim 2:11 Faithful is the word: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him;