

Simplifying Life (Part Six)

Yielding to God's Laws & Man's Laws

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Greetings from Simi Valley, California, right in the middle of what I call the Hopalong Cassidy Basin, five miles from the Reagan Presidential Library on the west rim and seven miles from the Corriganville Movie Ranch, my daily prayer and meditation trail on the east rim, among the magnificent boulders and canyons of the Santa Susana Mountains, keeping company with the jackrabbits, coyotes, rattlesnakes, buzzards, and mountain lions.

I trust that everyone made it safely home from the Feast by now. Let me just say that it was such a pleasure to see many of you there, and we now truly miss you. We have such a great group of young people—it was great to get to know them a little better.

For the past eight months, we have been navigating through a sermon series on simplifying life, including the topics: Simplifying Life (Part One) Eliminating Physical and Spiritual Clutter; (Part Two) Time Organization-Conserving and Redeeming Time; (Part Three) Managing Human and Spiritual Relationships; (Part Four) Cultivating the Ability to Wait on God's Timing; (Part Five) Keeping the Sabbath to Simplify Life, and bringing us today to the sixth—and the penultimate message titled “Simplifying Life (Part Six): Yielding to God's Laws and Man's Laws.”

My SPS or thesis for this message is that life becomes unnecessarily complicated when we resist Almighty God's design and His authority structures. True simplicity comes only from living within God's order: embracing His holy and spiritual commandments as well as respecting legitimate human authority.

I Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

The context of this verse is the apostle Paul's admonition to the congregation at Corinth to use their divinely-given gifts responsibly. The *Amplified Classic* edition renders this passage: "For He [Who is the source of their prophesying] is not a God of confusion and disorder but of peace and order, as [is the practice] in all the churches of the saints (God's people)"

Are we complicating our lives by resisting the very laws designed to bless us? Please consider: A river's banks never restrict the water but instead give it direction and momentum. Likewise, God's laws and most of man's laws provide secure boundaries that bring peace, safety, and simplicity.

This verse comes in the middle of Paul's extended teaching on orderly worship in the assembly of Christ's followers (I Corinthians 12:14). Chapter 14 specifically deals with the use of spiritual gifts, particularly tongues and prophecy in public worship.

Paul insists that spiritual manifestations should only build up the church and never cause disorder or chaos. The Greek word translated as confusion, *akatastasia*, connotes disorder, instability, or chaos.

Paul feels compelled to correct inappropriate uses of spiritual gifts that were leading to disorganized, noisy, and unedifying worship service. His theological argument is simple: if the result of the church gathering is confusion, it cannot possibly reflect the nature of God, who is a God of order. True worship should reflect God's character, and since God is orderly, public worship likewise should be structured, respectful, and edifying.

The Greek word *eirene* suggests not only calmness or quiet, but also a sense of harmony and right relationship, between individuals in the gathered body of Christ and Almighty God. Paul is not advocating sterile, lifeless meetings, but instead what is Spirit-led and constructive. The apostle Paul's statement, "as in all churches of the saints" appeals to a universal standard. In other words, this is not just advice for Corinth but instead it is how all churches right up to this very day should function. Paul asserts that God's nature and expectations for orderly worship applies to every local gathering or assembly of chosen saints.

To summarize this section, Paul insists on:

- 1) Order in Worship: worship should be intelligible, participatory and edifying—certainly not chaotic and confusing.
- 2) Character of God: How we conduct ourselves in services reflects what we believe about God. If He is indeed a God of peace, our gathering should mirror that peace.
- 3) Spiritual Gifts with Purpose: Paul in no way discourages spiritual gifts but instead emphasizes that they must be used lovingly and wisely to build up or edify the church.

God's chosen saints have been instructed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul, and Jesus' brother James that faith without works is stone dead and law-keeping is mandatory forever.

As the apostle Paul told Craig Sablich down on the bayou, our Lord did not nail the Ten Commandments on the cross; He nailed our death penalty. Paul never said that we no longer had to keep the law.

When antinomian protestants (both mainline and fundamentalist evangelicals) claim that God's holy law is no longer in force, including the seventh day Sabbath and clean and unclean laws which have been in-force from creation and will exist through eternity (Psalm 119:44, 152, 160), they are proclaiming themselves spiritual anarchists, subject to the apostle Paul's warning in Romans 13. More about that later.

Our Savior on His last Passover as a human, declared, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." All of God's holy and spiritual laws are rooted in love. When we keep them in the letter and the spirit, we fulfill the law of love, aligning our behavior with the greatest commandments to love God and to love our neighbors—including our enemies as ourselves.

Psalm 19:7-10 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple [It is

too bad that Mother Eve never heard or read this psalm.]; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Interestingly, in the article appearing in Torah.org, “A Slice of Time with Honey on the Side,” there is a custom in the Jewish community of dipping an apple in honey on Rosh Hashana, alluding to a desire to renew one’s understanding of Torah, but on an even deeper level.

Psalm 19: 11 Moreover, by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.

Psalm 19:7-11 presents the Word of God as living, luminous, and life-giving, accomplishing what human wisdom cannot accomplish, that is, transformation from within. Each separate description, law, testimony, precept, commandment, fear, and rules, focuses upon a different facet of God’s revelation, yet all amazingly converge in the profound truth that Almighty God’s Word is perfectly sufficient and supremely satisfying. We see in this psalm a foreshadowing of Christ Himself, the Word made flesh, and through whom our soul is truly revived and rehabilitated.

Please turn to James 1, verse 25, where our Lord and Savior’s brother equated the law with liberty or freedom from bondage.

James 1:25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

The *Amplified Edition* adds the following clarifying details: “But he who looks carefully into the perfect law, and faithfully abides by it, not having become a [careless listener who forgets but an active doer [who obeys], he will be blessed and favored by God in what he does [in his life of obedience].” This verse sits within a passage (James 1:22-25) contrasting hearing God’s Word with doing it. Using the image of someone looking in a

mirror, likening this behavior to hearing God's Word and not acting on it, James encourages the opposite: the person who truly looks intently into God's Word and acts upon it.

In the phrase, "But the one who looks into the perfect law of liberty," the Greek verb *parakupto* connotes bending down or stooping to look closely, namely, an intentional, careful examination, not a casual glance, but rather a serious, reflective, engagement with God's Word.

The "perfect law" points to God's will which was fulfilled and revealed through Jesus Christ. It is perfect because it is whole, complete, and leads to maturity (James 1:4). The expression "law of liberty" seems paradoxical and a blatant contradiction to most professing antinomian, anarchistic Protestants. How can any kind of law bring freedom?

Jesus' half-brother James insists that true freedom can only be found in obedience to God, not in autonomy. When God's chosen saints follow God's Word, containing God's law, they are liberated from sin's bondage and self-deception. We must remember our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's teaching in John 8:31-32, "If you abide in My word. . . the truth will set you free."

In verse 25, James uses the expression "and perseveres" (ESV), suggesting that the blessing does not come from merely a single act of looking or doing, but from continued, sustained faithful practice. The word suggests endurance and steadfastness. My dear brothers and sisters, we must regard our discipleship as a sustained habit, not just a momentary impulse. When James uses the phrase "being not hearer but a doer who acts," he continues his contrast between passive reception and active obedience. The forgetful hearer represents superficial religion, that is, hearing sermons or reading Scripture without transformation.

The doer (that should be us) who acts lives out the Word, embodies faith through conduct. When James uses the phrase "he will be blessed in his doing," he maintains that this blessing is not merely a reward after obedience but is in the doing itself. When we obey God's Word containing His holy and spiritual law, we obtain spiritual flourishing, joy, and alignment with our divine purpose, a concept which is echoed in Psalm 1, "Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord."

James 1:25 forms the thesis or central theme for the entire letter, that authentic faith expresses itself in action, rejecting both legalism (mechanical and rote rule following) and passive religious behavior, asserting that obedience to Christ's teaching is not bondage, but true freedom.

Consequently, we are obligated to meditate deeply, engage in Scripture with attentiveness, reflection, and an ardent desire to apply it to our behavior. We must exercise perseverance, making obedience a consistent practice rather than an occasional response.

We are urged to actively live out faith, realizing that spiritual maturity does not come from information, but instead *transformation*, converting God's holy and spiritual law into genuine behavior. We must find joy in obedience, realizing that the "blessing" which James refers to is the inner satisfaction of walking in absolute alignment with God's will.

As God's called-out saints, we must keep God's Word central in our daily decisions, simplifying our choices by asking: "What does God's Word say?"

Romans 13:1-2 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

The *Amplified Classified* editions adds a few more salient details, "Let every person be loyally subject to the governing (civil) authorities. For there is no authority except from God [by His permission, His sanction], and those that exist do so by God's appointment. Therefore he who resists and sets himself up against the authorities resists what God has appointed and arranged [in divine order]. And those who resist will bring down judgment upon themselves [receiving the penalty due them]."

Brothers and sisters, all authority, all authority, all authority [including Gavin Newsome, Tim Walz, Tina Kotek, and J. B. Pritzker] were established

by God, and resisting authority complicates life. You cannot possibly realize all the times I have had the urge to grab a pitchfork and drive up to Sacramento to set things straight.

Romans 13:1-2 is encapsulated within Paul's larger exhortation, encompassing Romans 12 through 15, explaining how God's called-out saints should live in the world, especially in relation to others beyond their own families as well as their spiritual siblings.

After teaching about love, humility, and peace in chapter 12, Paul turns to the follower of Christ's relationship with the civil government.

During the time of Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul, the Roman government was primarily under the rule of Emperor Augustus and his successors, such as Tiberius (reigning from 14-37 AD), Caligula (reigning from 37-41 AD), Claudius (reigning from 41-54 AD), and Nero (reigning from 54-68 AD), probably the most cruel and evil of all the Caesars.

Augustus came to power in 27 BC, significantly expanding the Roman Empire, including Judea as a province, appointing Herod the Great, who played a crucial role in the life of Jesus, including the events surrounding His birth and crucifixion. Historians have characterized the Roman Empire as a centralized government, establishing extensive road networks, and having a common language which thankfully facilitated the rapid spread of Christianity and missionary activities of the apostle Paul.

Paul understood that the Roman government was an extremely powerful, and sometimes evil oppressive system. Yet, Paul still calls believers to recognize the legitimacy of governmental authority within God's sovereign order.

Sadly, many of my former Ambassador students and colleagues are feverishly working overtime, attempting to overthrow the current government of the United States, tossing out what they have labeled as the anti-Christ Nazi dictator. May Almighty God rebuke their insane behavior.

I Peter 2:13-15 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of

evildoer and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Please allow Wrangler Dave to read this passage from the *Amplified Classic* edition. “Be submissive to every human institution and authority for the sake of the Lord, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to bring vengeance (punishment, justice) to those who do wrong and to encourage those who do good service. For it is God’s will and intention that by doing right [your good and honest lives] should silence (muzzle, gag) the ignorant and ill-informed criticisms of foolish persons.”

Traffic laws, tax laws, community ordinances for order and peace. In verse 13, Peter urges God’s chosen saints to submit to human authorities, not out of fear or blind obedience, but instead “for the Lord’s sake.”

It is important to remember that our motivation to submit is not merely civic, but theological. God’s chosen people honor authority because it reflects God’s order in the world (Romans 13:1-2). The phrase “every human institution” (literally “every human creation”) itemizes the various social and political structures humans live under. Peter includes the emperor (who during Peter’s time would have been Nero) reminding us that the submission should not be on condition of the ruler’s character (as many of my former Ambassador students currently believe) but instead on the believer’s commitment to God’s sovereignty.

We should not suggest that Peter is endorsing tyranny, but rather it reflects a call to live peaceably within society, so the gospel is not hindered by unnecessary rebellion. When Peter wrote this letter (around 63-64 AD), God’s people were living under the tyrannical Roman Emperor Nero.

Nero’s reign (64-68 AD) began with relative stability but ended with notorious cruelty and persecution of Christ’s followers, especially after the Great Fire of Rome (64 AD) which Nero blamed for igniting.

Followers of Christ, God's chosen saints, were a minority, often misunderstood and viewed with suspicion. Because they refused to worship the emperor, the Romans considered them politically subversive and enemies of the state.

In this intense, tumultuous environment, Peter's command to God's people to "be subject to every human institution" was both radical and wise, showing that followers of Christ were not revolutionaries aiming to overthrow the empire, but instead they were citizens of integrity, obeying laws and serving the public good, even while acknowledging that Jesus alone was Lord.

Peter's words reflect a delicate balance: Submission to government is an act of obedience to Almighty God, but ultimate loyalty remains with Christ, not Caesar (Acts 5:29: "We must obey God rather than men.") Historians claim that this teaching helped protect the early Christian community from unnecessary persecution, giving them a moral reputation that even pagan observers (like Pliny the Younger, in the early second century) later acknowledged.

What are we supposed to do when man's laws conflict with God's laws? Peter and the other apostles in Acts 5:29 declare, "We must obey God rather than man."

All of us are familiar with the accounts in Daniel 3, where Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego obeyed God even when they believed it would cost them their lives. Likewise, Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, which he assumed would be his imminent death. God's people must live responsibly by paying taxes, obeying civil laws, and honoring leaders (Romans 13:7), but we should never compromise our faith when man's law contradicts God's laws.

On Monday, June 4, 2025, Dr. Anthony Fauci was confronted by GOP lawmakers, scrutinizing his response to the COVID-19 pandemic, examining theories of the origin virus. Sadly, most Americans and most church of God members do not realize that this horrible virus did not originate in Wuhan, China, but in the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, under the

supervision of Dr. Shi Zhengi, also known as the bat lady, who was transferred to Wuhan when alarmed scientists warned the government that these gain of function experiments were deadly, capable of wiping out millions of people.

According to Tim Brown in his May 6, 2020 *Gateway Pundit* article titled, “Dr. Anthony Fauci Likely Broke U.S. Law When He Funded Wuhan Lab (with American tax dollars) to Continue Corona Projects Banned in US in 2014,” reveals that the know-how behind the weaponizing of this killer virus was developed at the University of North Carolina Virology Laboratory, conducted by a team of scientists, including Dr. Shi Zhengi, who was later transferred to the Wuhan Laboratory after her work at North Carolina was suspended.

Dr. Rand Paul has conclusively proved the disastrous consequences of Dr. Fauci’s experiments as well as his continuous perjury before the Congress.

Another thing most Americans and most church of God members were not aware of was that the vaccine for Covid was every bit as dangerous as the vaccine itself, and that the government mask mandate and the vaccine mandates were evil attempts at tyrannizing the American people as well as Jacob’s offspring in Britain, Australia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and brother Judah’s postage stamp domicile, the state of Israel.

The evil plan-demic was foisted upon the world by the criminal WHO, CDC, and Big Pharma, currently under scrutiny by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as he tries to push back on this evil, attempting to Make America Healthy Again (MAHA). RFK Jr. also wrote the first definitive book exposing Dr. Fauci’s evil plans.

When these government mandates were enforced, one of my former students from England, the same one who accused me of worshipping the Sabbath Day rather than God, tried to convince me that the apostle would have worn a mask, and would have been vaccinated. I replied to her that the apostle Paul might have worn a mask, but that he would draw the line at accepting an experimental vaccine with deadly DNA altering substances he would not have taken.

In retrospect, after many of my friends both in and out of the church took the vaccine and then died, I feel a sense of profound alarm. Too many of our sister congregations in the greater church of God knuckled under to governmental pressure and have reaped the lethal deadly consequences of their spiritual timidity.

As I have said in a previous message, Dave Maas' opinions do not constitute Church of the Great God policy, nor do I ever want to violate anybody's conscience, but nevertheless when something conflicts with my conscience, then I feel a necessity to speak.

My first pastor, the late Charles Sherwin McMichael, never directly told people what to do in financial matters or health matters, but he would say, "I personally would not do this," and the members of the congregation would get the point.

Consequently, the last time I ever took a vaccine was 1956, namely the Salk Polio Vaccine. The government and the medical community were just as pushy and aggressive then as they are today. Up and down the Highway 169 along the Minnesota River Valley, about every 10 miles were billboards of a man in a wheelchair, with a caption "Don't Press Your Luck—Get your vaccine today." Another motivator was visiting the Le Sueur County Fair where one of the exhibits was a man in an iron lung. Too many of us have been intimidated with propaganda, and that propaganda will wax more bizarre than ever in the years ahead.

Congressman Brad Wenstrup (R), Ohio 2nd congressional district, Chairman of the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic, stated that Americans during the deceitful plan-demic have been aggressively bullied, shamed and silenced for merely questioning or debating issues such as social distancing, masks, vaccines, or the origins of Covid. Congressman Wenstrup, who said he was seeking accountability in this hearing, accused Fauci of overseeing "one of the most invasive regimes of domestic policy the U.S. has ever seen."

Several have told me they took the shot because their doctor forced them to. Well, my doctor, a cousin of my daughter-in-law (or my niece-in-law) for several years tried to make me take a flu shot or a covid shot, only to be

given a vituperative lecture on the evils of Anthony Fauci and the Gates Foundation from her crotchety old uncle.

I do not know what the source of the next government overreach, but I counsel you to develop spiritual intestinal fortitude not to compromise, defiling our bodies and minds.

One major lesson I took away from the Feast this year was to yield to and embrace our trials for the results they will bring. Our Savior tells us in John 15:2 that, “Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”

Jesus’ half-brother James encourages us, “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

In his October 9th message, “The Feast of Tabernacles and Unleavened Bread,” David Grabbe, in showing the chiasmic symmetry of the holy days, states that Unleavened Bread focuses upon cleansing, sincerity, and feeding on Christ, the Bread of life. Consequently, when we remove food from our dwellings, we purify every sphere of authority under God, thereby building a spiritual house upon Christ.

Tabernacles, in contrast, emphasizes impermanence and humility, dwelling in temporary booths, reminding us of our dependence on God’s daily provision in the wilderness. Together the permanence of houses and the transience of booths teach us that security lies not in possessions or in comfort but in Almighty God’s sustaining presence. The physical symbols of food and dwelling illustrate some divine paradoxes.

During Unleavened Bread, self-sufficiency and sin, but during Tabernacles, housing lacks permanence, worldly security, and control. Through abundance and lack, permanence and transience, God’s people learn to dwell in His presence, feed on His Word, and trust in His timing.

The Feast of Tabernacles 2025 was the best Feast I have ever kept, and it was also the most unstable and shaky—almost like Tevye’s description of the *Fiddler on the Roof*. Five distinct experiences during the Feast which seemed like I was heading for a disaster, miraculously turned around and I was able to see God’s hand intervening on my behalf.

The first day we had choir practice, for which I thought that I was more prepared than I turned out to be. I could see that our Kapellmeister had a lot of concern on his face, but miraculously after several hours of catch-up practice, God blessed the result.

The second disaster happened when my son packed his cornet among his clothes in the suitcase only to find out that he could not pull the mouthpiece off it. He called Julie and said, “Mom, I’m afraid to tell Dad because he will probably get very upset.” Well, we arranged to go to the music store in the mall to have his mouthpiece pulled off, only to find that he still could not get it to play. Aaron asked about getting a newer trumpet, to which they said they had one professional Yamaha Trumpet, hardly used but in mint condition which they would sell for one-third the price of a brand-new instrument. We bought it for him as a Feast present, and he played it for the first time 20 minutes later at the Ulmer Trio Reunion Taping—which many of you have seen on my YouTube channel. (I am going to give another shameless plug. If only three of you join my YouTube channel, it will bring the subscriptions to over 100.)

Three more heart-stopping occurrences happened after that at the Feast and God mercifully turned some near disasters into miraculous turn-arounds. By the time Julie and I discovered we had Covid back at home, I was able to take that petty annoyance. After I asked Mark Schindler for an anointed cloth, my scary symptoms started to clear up. Last night, Julie told me that she had never seen me so calm before.

From time to time, an acquaintance by the name of Kevin McGuire and I have deep philosophical discussions at the Old Susana Café at the edge of Corriganville, very similar to the discussion Craig had with the apostle Paul down at the Louisiana Bayou. Kevin McGuire seems to know ten times as many Bible scriptures than I do, and he is more skillful at arguing than I am.

I related to him some of the frustrations I had experienced at the Feast last week, and how I seemingly have more than my share of them.

Kevin looked at me intently asking me, “Dave, what does the Bible teach us is the polar opposite of faith?” I replied, “Well, I suppose its fear,” to which he replied, “No it isn’t. The opposite of fear is courage.” “Ok” I said, “How about doubt” to which he replied, “No, the opposite of doubt is confidence” “How about disbelief,” to which he replied, “The opposite of disbelief is belief.”

I then got somewhat frustrated, muttering, “Kevin, I’m getting tired of your word games. What does the Bible say is the opposite of faith?” to which he replied, “For we walk by faith, not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7; Romans 8: 24; Hebrews 11:1-2). I replied “Oh.”

Yielding to God’s and man’s law brings simplicity. Obedience narrows the options, leaving fewer choices. For example, God’s chosen saints never have to agonize over dishonesty in business, for God’s holy and spiritual law makes the choice abundantly clear. Yielding to God’s law reduces conflict and strife.

Proverbs 3:1-2 My son, do not forget my law, but let your hear keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.

The *Amplified Classic* edition adds the following clarifying details. “My son, forget not my law or teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; For length of days and years of a life [worth living] and tranquility [inward and outward and continuing through old age till death], these shall they add to you.”

Isaiah 32:17 The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

The *Amplified Classic* edition renders this passage, “And the effect of righteousness will be peace [internal and external], and the result of righteousness will be quietness and confident trust forever.”

To summarize this message, we must remember that to simplify life, we are required to submit to God's infallible order. When we resist, we hopelessly create complexity, but when we choose to obey, Almighty God brings peace. This week, let us identify one area where we have resisted God's law or man's law and make the college effort to yield it to Christ.

To conclude this message, please turn to my second favorite scripture in the Bible:

Psalm 119:165 Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.