

Christianity, a Revealed Religion,

— and the status of human thought

LIMITED, RESTRICTED, FINITE

MORE AND MORE, governments simply assume they can remake morality and disregard natural morality, which is natural law, natural moral law.

This is a grievous error and a great evil.

VITAL DIFFERENCE of GOOD and EVIL

“Does something become good because governments say so?” NOT NECESSARILY SO!

“Or do governments say so because it is good?” i.e. good in itself and in the circumstances: YES.

GOOD versus EVIL, TRUTH versus ERROR

Similarly, “Is it true because the Church says so?” OR

“Does the Church say so because it is true?” YES since the ‘true’ and the ‘good’ flow from God’s nature and God reveals these things through His creation AND through His New Creation, His Holy Catholic Church, an ‘extension’ of the Incarnate Son of God guided by the Holy Spirit.

LIMITED SCOPE of GOVERNMENT POWERS

“Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the money for the tax.” And they brought him a coin. And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” They said, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

Matthew 22:17-21

LIMITED SCOPE of CHURCH’S AUTHORITY — authority to teach but not to change the Gospel

Just as governments cannot rewrite God’s natural morality, neither can bishops and higher authority in the Church rewrite Christ’s Gospel or teach a Gospel contrary to Tradition, Scripture and Magisterium.

THERE IS BUT ONE GOSPEL, says St Paul, so there cannot be a “New Paradigm”

...bear with me in a little foolishness. For if some one comes and preaches another Jesus than the one we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you submit to it readily enough.

2 Corinthians 11:1,4

Again I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and turning to a different gospel — not that there is another gospel, but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

Galatians 1:6-9

BE WARNED — it is happened now, in 2018

...for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Acts 20:27-30

For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

1 Corinthians 14:8 (KJV)

St John’s visionary revelations

You have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice immorality.

Apocalypse 2:14; cf. Numbers 22-24

But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practise immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.

Apocalypse 2:20; cf. Jezebel in 1 Kings 19:1-2; 21:1-16

Christ’s Gospel, held in trust by the Church

O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

1 Timothy 6:20 (cf. 1 Tim 1:11; 2 Tim 1:12,14; Titus 1:3)

Beware of false prophets who prophesy lies

Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, “I will entice him [the king of Israel]”. And the LORD said to him, “By what means?” And he said, “I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.”

1 Kings 22:21-23

My hand will be against the prophets who see delusive visions and who give divinations... Because, yea, because they have misled my people, saying, “Peace”, when there is no peace...

Ezekiel 13:9-10

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Matthew 7:15

False Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

Matthew 24:24

False prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

2 Peter 2:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 John 4:1

The True Development of Gospel Doctrine and Good Government

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOSPEL DOCTRINE

THE FAITHFUL are entitled to the truths of the faith in their entirety and integrity. The new evangelization aims at this for all the modern world.

The new paradigm does not. The Church cannot re-interpret the Gospel to suit the modern world, nor call that new interpretation a 'development of doctrine'.

St Vincent de Lerins (†450) gave a test for a true Catholic development of doctrine: *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est*, "**What has been believed always, everywhere and by all**":

Is there to be no development of doctrine in Christ's Church? Certainly there should be great development. Who would be so grudging towards his fellow-men and so hostile to God as to try to prevent it? But care should be taken to ensure that it **really is development of the faith and not alteration**. Development implies that each point of doctrine is expanded within itself, while alteration suggests that a thing has been changed from what it was into something different.

But it must be growth **within the limits of its own nature**, that is to say **within the framework of the same dogma and of the same meaning**.

Let religion, which is of the spirit, **imitate the processes of the body**. For, although bodies develop over the years and their individual parts evolve, they do not change into something different. It is true that there is a great gap between the prime of youth and the maturity of later years, but the people who reach these later years are the same people who were once adolescents. So, although the size and outward appearance of any individual may change, it is still the same person, and the nature remains the same.

But if the human form is changed into some shape that is not of its own kind, or at least something is added or taken away from the full complement of its members, then the whole body must perish or become a monster or at least be weakened in some way.

It is fitting, then, that **Christian doctrine too should follow these laws of development**, so that with the passage of years it may be strengthened, with time it may make progress and with age it may achieve greater profundity. Long ago our ancestors sowed the seeds of the faith in the field of the Church. It would be quite incongruous and wrong if their descendents were to reap the weeds of error in place of the harvest of truth.

Quoted from *The Divine Office* vol. III, Friday Week 27, p. 626.

See Blessed John Henry Newman, *The Development of Christian Doctrine*, his convert's act of faith in 1845.

DEVELOPMENT of GOOD GOVERNMENT

GOVERNMENTS exist to **harmonize society**. Left to ourselves, relationships between persons and countries always seem to degenerate into acrimony.

Good governments legislate finer details of natural rights. They never try to legalize immorality.

Rights and duties are not just anything we like. They are built into our nature as moral creatures.

Good government is responsible to its citizens.

It is reasonable to hold that governments get their authority to govern from God, via the people. Persons are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and get rights directly from their Creator. Each person has dignity, duties and destiny. These are the ultimate source of natural human rights and duties.

Such a philosophy is **at least a workable hypothesis** as judged by Scientific Method, and sometimes even accepted by atheists.

Alternative hypotheses must find another source of authority. Whence comes a right to elect governments? Where do voters get authority to replace it?

Governments cannot just legislate anything they like. Religion and morals (or even some dwindling moral capital lingering after their abandonment) empower people collectively to govern themselves and, incidentally, to escape being choked with pettyfogging laws.

The foundations on which democracy depends are beyond the whims of governments. They include the human rights and duties which guard life, marriage, property and truth, by forbidding murder, adultery, theft and lies. Not even democratic governments can change such rights and duties, nor make the biological facts about unhealthy acts into healthy acts, or change wrong into right.

Good Governments operate on principles

THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY is a **social right** since a government in a society exists for the sake of persons, not persons for the sake of government. A government must help persons and smaller societies to function (only usurping them as a last resort) so that they enjoy freedom and rights, and share in the common good.

Subsidiarity means being **supportive**. It is not the same as subsidiary, which means being **subordinate**.

The **PRINCIPLE OF SOLIDARITY** is a complementary principle, a **social duty**. Every person and smaller society has a duty to make society work by accepting its laws — laws that contribute to the common good supportive of persons, and persons subordinating themselves to the common good, i.e. to natural rights and duties.

Solidarity implies that some subordination will be necessary.

Personal freedom and social order are ensured by a proper balance between subsidiarity and solidarity, so that the common good is upheld.

Practically speaking, subsidiarity is "all for one", and solidarity is "one for all".

If subsidiarity is ignored, a false emphasis on solidarity leads to socialism — socialization is only justifiable as a last resort — and to totalitarianism, either fascism or communism. If solidarity is ignored, a false emphasis on subsidiarity leads to individualism or to an unsound capitalism, and a trampling on natural rights.

The function of the State's authority is to protect individuals and to foster family life, but not to absorb them nor partly substitute itself for them.

Father James Tierney