

**Articles and Sermons :: Non-Resistance Asserted by Daniel Musser Part 4****Non-Resistance Asserted by Daniel Musser Part 4 - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2007/8/19 12:49**

NON-RESISTANCE ASSERTED

by Daniel Musser

Part 4

For some centuries before the Reformation, the Catholic religion was almost universal in what was called the Christian world. The ecclesiastical and temporal powers were united, and the Catholic religion was the national religion of all Christian nations. This was popular opinion, and popular opinion also favored persecution of those who dissented in their religion from the established creed. After the success of the Reformation, and the national religion of different powers had changed to that of Protestantism, the popular feeling of favor to a union of Church and State, and persecuting those who dissented from the established religion, still continued; and we find Calvin, with many other great and learned reformers, countenanced and advised it. These are facts, proven by history, and cannot be denied. In our day, I suppose none of their professed followers would justify persecution for religion under any circumstances. How was it that these learned and enlightened men did not discover this principle of the Gospel? It may be urged that mankind has advanced in light and knowledge since then, and they should be excused on account of the "semi-barbarous" age in which they lived, having just emerged from Papal darkness and superstition. But why is it that for several centuries before, and at that very time, there was a poor, despised, and persecuted people who were comparatively ignorant as regards literary attainments and worldly knowledge, who had this light, and protested so strongly against this spirit of persecution as being anti-Christian and diabolical? The Albigenses and Waldenses, for several centuries before the Reformation, and the Mennonites in the days of Luther and Calvin, professed this same non-resistant doctrine, declared persecution to be contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the Gospel, and insisted on an entire separation of Church and State. Popular opinion then did not favor religious toleration, or the separation of Church and State, and popular religion was with it. But now, several centuries later, popular opinion has changed, and so has popular religion. Religious persecution is now denounced everywhere, and no man dares support such an idea. In some of the nations of Europe, there is still a national Church or religion, and Church and State are partially united; but in our country it is unpopular, and professed Christians generally protest against it as being contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. How does it come that it took these great and learned men a whole century to discover what these poor, illiterate, despised, and persecuted people had discovered so long before? All admit now that it is truth, and how does it come that the spirit of truth did not lead men into it? Christ's promise must have failed, or these men must have been destitute of it; for he made an absolute promise that it would lead men into all truth. This would look as if Divine truth could not be received until natural light revealed it.

At the time of our Revolutionary war, popular opinion made it a virtue to resist the government of Great Britain, which, at the time, was the power referred to in Romans 13. Then almost every pulpit in the land resounded with calls to arm the colonists and to overthrow the power. In our day, popular religion, with one breath, eulogizes the Fathers of the Revolution for resisting and overthrowing the powers; and in the next breath the passage of Paul is referred to, to prove that those who resist shall receive damnation! Can such people believe it, or do they know what they say, when they say God is immutable? I question whether one of the clergymen who preached up the duty of Christians to support the colonies in their Revolution ever once quoted Romans 13.

The Declaration of Independence of the colonies sets forth the right of the people to revolutionize and change their form of government when it fails to accomplish the purpose for which it was established. But now I ask, how can this be done in agreement with Paul's instruction in Romans 13? He said there, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." It will not do to say, "the power may become corrupt, oppressive, and destructive of the end for which it was established." That the "Government of Great Britain over the colonies was so at the time they rebelled." This does not meet the difficulty. Paul said every soul shall be subject and not resist, for "there is no power but of God." Then, to whomsoever this command is given, it is impossible to resist the government without violating Paul's instruction. No government or power is here excepted; whether good or bad, it is of God, for "there is no power but of God, and whosoever resisteth it, resisteth God's ordinance, and shall receive to himself damnation." Certainly, if this command is given to the

Church, then it can take no part in any revolution. If it is given to the world, then it cannot. Then the Gospel would not recognize any revolution at all. But separate the kingdom of Christ and that of this world, and the solution is easy. The command of Paul here is to Christ's kingdom, and does not concern the world or the unconverted at all. They are left where God had long before placed them, under the Law, and in the kingdom of the world, which is under the power of the sword—yet ruled by the Most High, who rules in the armies of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, gives the kingdom to whomsoever he will, and sets up over it the basest of men.

Among the Jews and heathen nations of old, who were all under the Law, when a government became wicked, unjust, and ungodly, God raised up adversaries and punished them; or He divided their territory, or overthrew their government and gave the power to others. It is expressly said that the Lord raised up the adversaries, and when Israel was separated from Judea, the Lord said it was "from him." Thus the Lord sets up the king, and removes him again. These were under the Law, and the unconverted are there still, under the same principle as they ever were, and under the same control as they ever were. The government of Great Britain was corrupt, oppressed the colonies, and subverted the end for which God established government. God raised up an adversary to the power of Great Britain in the hearts of the people of the colonies, and they rebelled against the government, overthrew its power, and established the government of the United States in its stead.

We are accustomed to look upon the "Fathers of the Revolution" as being models of virtue, patriotism, and honesty; and, in this respect, I am ready to accord all that is claimed for them. They may have been just, honorable, and faithful in the discharge of their duties in all the relations of life. I admit that they were instruments in the hand of God to accomplish this particular purpose. They were faithful in the discharge of their duty in the kingdom of this world, and God bestowed upon them those natural blessings which such faithfulness has promise of. When we assert what we believe the Scripture to teach, that Christians cannot fight or resist evil, we are met by the objection of Washington and his comrades being Christians, and yet they fought. With all our reverence for the character of Washington, can we compare him with Christ? Or must we not still look to Christ as our guide and director, who alone has words of eternal life? And when we find his example and the teaching of Christ to disagree, can we hesitate to choose Christ as our leader? Certainly no one will pretend that all the services rendered to the country by the patriots of the Revolution would of themselves prove the patriots to be Christians. One at least of them, who rendered most signal service to the country, and who showed a most self-sacrificing spirit, was an avowed infidel. It is not our purpose, as it is no part of our duty, to criticize the religion of those who have departed, any further than to meet the objections which are urged against what we believe to be truth, and to point our readers to the true test of undefiled religion.

My purpose is to show what Christ and the Apostles taught as the duty of the believer. The commands that they taught are imperative, and no one may dare either to reject or disregard them, because of what any man has believed or done, however bright his moral virtues may shine. If Christ and his Apostles teach us that we shall not resist evil, then non-resistance must be the believer's duty, even though all the great and wise men in the world should disregard it. I yield to no man in admiration of moral virtue, but Christ must still remain the rule of my faith. Can a man be a Christian (in the true sense of the word) and not obey Christ's and the Apostles' commands? Then, if Christ teaches that we shall not resist the powers that be, how can they be true Christians who resist and overthrow their government? I again assert that it is not my purpose to criticize the religion of any man, whether living or dead. The natural desire to retain the friendship and good-will of man would forbid allusion to the wise and great men of the present or preceding ages, whose religious opinions we cannot approve, if duty did not constrain us to assert what we believe to be truth. Our opponents make these allusions necessary by urging the opinion and practice of popular men, and we may not shrink from the consequences of meeting whatever force there is in such argument (if it may be called argument). We are accustomed to boast of our manhood and independence, but I am unable to perceive either manhood or independence in the idea that because a thing is popular, it must be true, or because certain men, however high their standing in society, believe, say, or do a thing, it must be right.

Our opponents admit that the New Testament teaches a higher morality than the Old; and yet they would impose duties on Christians that were held to be immoral under the Old Testament. The Law that God gave the Jews forbids the use of the sword, except to defend or vindicate justice. Under this Law, it could not become the duty of one faithful Israelite to fight against another faithful one. This could not be—they could not fight without cause, and if they were faithful to the Law they would give no cause. But, if we take the view of Romans 13 that our opponents say is the meaning of Paul, it would become the duty of one Christian to fight against and try to kill another! And it would even become the duty of one to take up the sword, knowing that the cause is unjust, and go forth and kill his brother, who is fighting for right and justice! Paul said that "every soul shall be subject to the higher powers," and they say this makes it the duty of a Christian to obey the call, take up arms, and go forth to battle when the power calls for or demands our services in the battlefield. If this were Paul's meaning, he would not teach a higher morality than the Law, for it provided against this immoral and unreasonable occurrence. I expect that our opponents will admit that there are Christians in England, France, or Germany. Suppose that war should break out between one of these powers and our own. Our powers would issue a call for men to arm in defense of our rights. The opposite power would do the same, for Paul speaks to one as well as the other. One side must be wrong; therefore this view of Paul's teaching would make it the duty of one Christian to fight and

kill another, who was contending for right and justice. The position of our opponents makes this occurrence unavoidable. Is this consistent? Is it reasonable? Or, is there anything of the spirit of the Gospel in it?

It may be said that we should not engage in an unjust war; but this will not do, as Paul makes no exceptions, and this would overthrow their own position. And if this exception were admitted, what would it amount to? They would differ in opinion, as they always do. One would say, "It is just," and would fight; another would say, "It is unjust," and would refuse to obey the power—and, by their own argument, they would place themselves in the position we stand on. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1, "Not many wise, mighty, or noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish, weak, and despised to confound the wise and mighty." Persons of this class are but little acquainted with international law and disputes; consequently, they could not be expected to make correct decisions. Therefore, the difficulty and danger could not be avoided.

To prevent all such difficulty, inconsistency, and embarrassment, as well as to preserve the hearts of his children from anxiety and distracting care, God has chosen his children out of the world to serve him in spirit and in truth, in singleness of heart, and has said that they cannot serve God and mammon. He has commanded them to labor with their hands in the things that are good, so that they may have to give to those who are in need. For this reason, it is the duty of every Christian to follow some calling, trade, or profession so that they may be useful to their fellow man, and not to eat the bread of idleness. Care and idleness are alike unfavorable to devotion, and God has so ordained that his children shall be preserved free from either. The Savior said that we shall make our first care be for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto us. He does not intend that the things we need for our natural life shall be given to us without our labor or effort to obtain them, or He would not have commanded us to labor with our hands. But He will have us to do our duty and commit the rest to God without care for the consequences, for with all our care we cannot change the result. Who, by care and thought, can add a cubit to his stature, or make one hair white or black?

God desires the undivided affections of his children. He has given them his spirit, which sheds his love abroad in their hearts, and has separated them from every duty that would tend to alienate or divide their affections. The world has this tendency, and for this reason God has separated his children from it, so far as it is possible. The various and exciting duties of office in the kingdom of this world, suits at law, and politics all have a tendency to distract the mind and draw the affections away from God, and things pertaining to life eternal. Therefore, the Lord has denied them these privileges so that he may retain their affections; and their separation from them may show to the world that their treasure is in Heaven, and their affections there also. While consistency requires that they should take no part in and not seek to shape or influence the laws of the worldly kingdom, God needed, nevertheless, to give such direction so that his children should not come into collision with the world. Christ told his disciples the children should be free, but to avoid offence He commanded them to submit in a matter that involved no principle. He told them to give to Caesar the tribute-money bearing Caesar's image and inscription; and Paul said that we shall be subject to the powers and not resist, and pay them what is due to them. Peter said that we shall submit to every ordinance of kings and governors, for the Lord's sake. Neither of them intended that we shall obey, regardless of what Christ has taught. They suffered martyrdom rather than disobey God or violate the principles of the Gospel.

Government is necessary; it is right and good; it cannot exist without law; and law must be supported by the sword. No law would be regarded without the sword being with it. All officers in the government are supported by the sword, and their duties are discharged by virtue of its power. It is plain, then, that if the New Testament forbids the use of the sword to Christians, it must also forbid them to hold office in the government; for these all belong to the same kingdom and are supported by the same power. If they cannot exercise this duty themselves, then they cannot consistently delegate it to another. If they cannot themselves use the sword, they cannot consistently put it into the hands of another to use for them. The true principle of non-resistance, therefore, separates its possessor entirely from the kingdom of this world. They are in the world, but not of the world; and as they are not of it, so they have no right to take part in its affairs, or seek redress at its hands for any grievances they may have suffered from any source or from any cause. It would be unreasonable that they seek protection, or assist in electing officers, or make and shape laws, or direct the policy of a foreign power, especially if they will not share the burden and responsibility of its support or defense in the hour of danger. They live in the kingdom of this world by its tolerance; and if the world thinks them worthy to dwell in peace, and to let them enjoy the rights and privileges of citizens, they accept the favor with gratitude, and are duty bound to be obedient to all their laws and regulations, and to pay all taxes, duties, fines, or whatever rates or levies the government may see fit to impose upon them. This duty, the apostle Paul said, we shall make conscience of—not from fear of the penalty that would follow a refusal, but for conscience sake. The kingdom of this world has power over the things of the world, and whatever portion of its goods we have possession of, when they ask it of us, it is our duty to give it. It is theirs, and they only ask for what is their own when they demand it of us. We recognize and acknowledge the authority of the government over our bodies and all we possess. When government demands our personal service in any matter that is contrary to what God's word teaches, we may resign our bodies into their hands to bear whatever they see fit to visit upon us. Resist, we dare not, since it would be contrary to Paul's teaching; and obey them where God has forbidden, we cannot; therefore submission is the only course they can pursue.

I have said before, we find no fault with the Government for the course it has pursued, or is now pursuing. We do not pr

extend to say whether its policy toward the South has been just or unjust. Herein the wisdom of God is displayed. The duty of His children is the same, whether they live North or South; or whether the Government has dealt justly or unjustly; or whether the rebellion is justifiable or unjustifiable. Their duties cannot be affected by what the world does. We have until now been well contented under the power that has dominion over us. We acknowledge that it has been an ordinance for good to us, feel grateful for the favor it has until now shown us, and feel it to be our duty to pray to the Lord for His blessing upon those who have been instruments in His hand in dispensing this great favor; and that He will further endow them with wisdom and discretion, so that they may be able to discern what is right and just; and, above all, that He may give them grace to know His truth, and a willing mind to obey it.

But to pray for the success of any measure or policy of the Government, or to pray for the success of the army, North or South, I find no warrant for in the Gospel, either in letter or spirit. God sees not as man sees; His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. No man can stay His hand, or say, "What doest Thou?" It may appear very desirable to us that the Union should be restored, slavery abolished, and other reforms instituted under the restored Union, but God may have higher objects in view than it is possible for man to divine. No one can be otherwise than pained at the thoughts of the effusion of blood this war has induced, and at the great suffering consequent upon it. Our sincere and earnest prayer should be that His object may be speedily accomplished, and that men everywhere, both friend and enemy, may turn to the Lord with all their hearts, and find grace and favor with Him.

We do not recognize those as true non-resistants who profess to have conscientious scruples about bearing arms, and yet identify themselves so far with the kingdom of this world as to appeal to the powers for protection from suffering or to redress any grievance they may suffer, who will serve what are called civil offices under the powers that be, who will vote for officers to make or execute laws in the kingdom of this world, or such as will not go to the battle-field themselves, but will hire substitutes to go and do that for them which, they say, they dare not do themselves.

True non-resistants do not put their trust in an arm of flesh. God has promised to care for them, and in him they trust. They do not profess to believe that God will protect them from suffering, but He is able to do so, if it is His will; and if it is not His will, man cannot prevent it. If He wills it, He has a purpose in it, and we should pray to the Lord that His purpose may be attained in us, and we may only be made worthy to suffer for His name, and not to do anything whereby God may be dishonored. They know that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; they glory neither in their wisdom, in their might, nor in their riches; but they glory in this, that they know the Lord, who exercises loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. Their life and worldly goods are in the hands of the Lord; He gave them, and He has many ways by which to take them away again. Their concern is not so much how they may preserve these, as it is to preserve the life that is begotten in the soul by the power of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God. They look upon the commotions in the world as being in the hand of the Lord, who can control them according to His pleasure; and the interest they might take in them, or the efforts they might make to control them, could have no effect, except the effect it would have on themselves, in drawing their minds and affections away from more important objects.

Those in the world do not have this trust in God; their all is in the world. Their treasure is earthly, and their hearts and affections are with their treasure on earth. To preserve this treasure is their object, and as they are carnal, so they resort to carnal means to accomplish their end. This is natural and reasonable, and, so long as they resort to fair and honorable means, are not at all to be censured.

Since the commencement of the present war, when the War Department called for fresh levies of troops, and when our State was threatened with invasion, people have collected money to arm and equip militia for local or State service, and also for bounty to induce men to volunteer in the National service. This is not inconsistent for the world, or such as profess that it is the duty of Christians to take up arms in defense of their rights and country. But it is certainly inconsistent for those who profess to be non-resistant to pay or arm others to go and do what they say is wrong to do themselves.

The principle of non-resistance is that God is the portion of the believer, and no harm can befall those who trust in Him. If He allows them to be robbed, plundered of their goods and property, they do not look upon it as necessarily being harm to them. God has said that all things must work together for good to those who love him. This consideration induces an exercise in their minds, which will bring peaceful fruits of righteousness from the chastening of the Lord. God has given them the Holy Spirit, and this affords joy, comfort, and consolation under any bodily affliction or deprivation with which they can be visited. They can therefore thank God that he has given them a treasure which man cannot take from them.

It would be a very gross violation of this principle for non-resistants to show their reliance in or dependence on an arm of flesh by joining in with the world to contribute money for bounty to induce men to volunteer, or to arm and equip men to go forth and defend their person and property. They are weak flesh, with all other men; and this flesh will ever shrink from suffering. Their weak and timid nature may suggest the desire to see a strong army stand between them and danger, and even feel a secret wish, or be gratified, to see men enlist for defense. These are the natural promptings of our perverse nature, at which every faithful believer will be alarmed and will be more concerned about resisting this evil, or more fearful of being overcome by it, than they will be about the enemy of the State. They will pray to God to enable them to overcome this enemy and deliver them from its power; and also that, if it is His will to permit the enemies of the country to inflict any injury on their person or property, that He would give them grace to bear it in true Christian submission, an

d in all trials to walk worthy of the Lord. It would be very inconsistent to indulge or gratify this weakness by yielding ourselves up in obedience to the flesh. Christ said that we shall "be wise as serpents, but harmless as doves." The dove will flee from the falcon until it is captured, when it submits without resistance. It would seem as if the disciples of Jesus might use their natural reason, or ingenuity, to escape capture or injury by their enemies, but must be harmless when captured, and never prevent capture by defense— to flee or hide themselves, but never to resist evil.

There is at the present time quite an excitement in the country on account of the pending draft. Meetings have been held in the different sub-districts to devise means to induce men to enlist, so as to make up the quota of men required for each township. This is all right and proper, in men who do not profess to be defenseless; and many are induced to engage in it from motives of humanity or consideration for the feelings of their neighbors, upon whom it would operate seriously. But how can those who profess to be disciples of Jesus Christ, and who say as such that Christ has forbidden them to fight, join in with our opponents and pay men to go and fight for them, or in their stead? It is said, "It is to avoid the draft," but by what means? By inducing other men to go in our stead! Anyone can see that there is no consistency here.

If it is wrong for me to go, it is wrong to pay another to go for me. One of three motives must induce men to engage in this course: to place men in the army to fight, to avoid the inconvenience of fighting, or to save money by getting the substitute cheaper than the commutation fee. True reliance upon God (which every Christian should have) will cause us to adhere closely to His word or commandments, with a full assurance that He will make a way to escape without violating the principles of His Gospel. But in saying God will make a way to escape, I do not wish to be understood that He will make such a way that we will escape without personal inconvenience and suffering. God has allowed some of His most faithful children to be severely tried by personal affliction, but yet He sustained them in faith and love so that they could overcome and bear what, to our natural sense, would seem impossible to endure. The work that God has wrought in the soul of the believer is what He has promised to protect. This is the believer's most precious treasure, and he is willing to sacrifice everything else rather than lose this, or dishonor his God by transgressing His command or violating the principle of His Gospel. God has brought the highest honor to His name by the suffering of His children; and should we shrink from anything that would bring honor to the name of our God? If we have not the confidence that God will support us in faith, and strengthen us so as to enable us to be faithful, we dishonor God by unbelief; and if we are not willing to endure the loss of all things for His sake, we cannot be true disciples of Jesus Christ.

It is alleged that, when we pay the commutation fee and the war tax, these are used for war purposes, and that the case is parallel with that of paying to induce volunteering, or buying substitutes. The world does not profess to be willing to suffer loss and inconvenience if it can be avoided by personal resistance or defense. When they take such measures, as before alluded to, they act rationally and consistently. The government is founded on this principle and cannot exist without the sword, and, whenever necessity requires it, must use the sword. Paul said that for this purpose we also pay tribute. It is due to the government, and we shall pay to all their dues. The commutation fee and what is called "war tax" are no more a "war tax" than any other tax we pay to keep up the government; and I am no more violating my non-resistance principles, if I pay one, than I do if I pay the other.

I have said before, all the estate or property we own, we hold only by the tolerance and authority of the powers that be. The powers have authority over all property, and have right to demand so much of it as they have need of. This we acknowledge, and have no right to refuse giving it to them, or to ask what use they intend making of it. If I buy property with a ground rent, or lien of any kind on it, that part or amount is not mine any more than if I had not bought the property. I have no right to withhold the payment of that money any more than I have a sum of money that I have borrowed, or other debt that I have contracted. Thus it is with land, and all property. The government originally owned all the land. It sold it to settlers, under its patent; they hold it on condition of paying such rates and levies as the Government may demand. Then, when we pay whatever tax is asked of us, we only give to it its due, as we would pay any other debt due; and for this reason Paul said we shall do it for conscience's sake. Every honest man makes conscience of withholding anything which is due to another, and so every true Christian makes conscience of returning his property, fairly and faithfully, to the officers of government, and punctually paying what it requires of him, with as little right to ask or inquire what use they design making of it, as they have to ask what use the person proposes to make of the money he has lent to us. There is therefore a very great difference between what we pay voluntarily, or without sanction of law, and what we pay on demand of the powers. If a person comes to me, and solicits a donation to give as a bounty to induce men to volunteer in the army, or to equip men to go and fight, by giving it I testify that I am interested in the cause and desire it to progress— when, at the same time, I do not know that I am not arming men to fight against what God designs to do. But if I owe a man a sum of money as a debt, and he comes and demands it, and tells me he intends it to arm and equip himself to go to war, I have no right to withhold payment. It is his, and he has a right to do with it as he pleases.

I would make no difference between paying a man to go to war, and going myself. I would not consider that I would any more violate the spirit of the Gospel in one case than the other; neither do I consider that I am any more violating the command of the Savior if I serve as a General in the field, or a soldier in the ranks, than I do if I serve as sheriff of the county, or justice of the peace, or cast my vote for member of Congress, Governor, or President of the United States; and would not make one iota more conscience to one than the other. I say more: those who vote for officers in the government, and use its power and authority to protect their rights and property, or appeal to law for justice, and yet refuse to defend t

he government in the time of need, are neither faithful to the kingdom of Christ or that of this world.

There are great numbers of professed non-resistants in the land who have never experienced the work in their souls upon which non-resistance is founded, and are, consequently, ignorant of its operation and power. They have, perhaps, read the Gospel, and heard the subject argued or treated upon, and perceive that war and violence are forbidden, and so embrace the doctrine in a legal spirit, but do not discern the spirit or principle contained in the command, or never experienced the work upon which the command is based.

No observance of outward commandments, however strict, will make us children of God or heirs of the promise. The religion of Jesus Christ consists of a living principle, begotten and born in the soul, the fruit of which is obedience to his commandments. The fruit must follow the birth, and where it does not exist, it is positive evidence that the principle does not exist; therefore the Savior said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," and "Why call ye me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not the things which I say." Paul said, "In Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love." Love is the principle that dwells in the soul of the believer, and the fruits of obedience must flow from it, or it is evidence that the principle does not exist. All the commands of the Gospel are to be considered fruits of the spirit—fruits of the work of conversion, or new birth. To take it in any other sense would be to make a law out of the Gospel.

The summary of the foregoing argument is that God created man in the beginning in such a state of purity and holiness that he was fitted to enjoy communion or fellowship with God. The image in which he was created consisted in the spirit or Divine love, which the soul possessed. In this state man needed no external law to govern him. The spirit and love of God influenced him, and led him to do what was right and just.

Man fell from this state by transgression. His soul was defiled by sin, and he thereby rendered unfit to stand or dwell in the presence of God. Here his relation was changed, from saint to sinner. He died to the image in which he was created, and, becoming the servant of sin, may be said to have received a new image. Instead of the influence of the love of God, he fell under the influence of self-love. This corrupted as well as defiled him, and violence and injustice followed as fruits. In consequence of these changed circumstances, government became necessary, and God, in mercy to man, instituted it. God promised man restoration, but the promise did not change his relation until the promise was fulfilled. In the meantime, God gave man a Law suited and adapted to his circumstances, but promised him a better law in time. The interim Law, with all the commandments, could not cleanse man from sin or change his nature or relation to God, but only served to make him more aware of his want. Those who believed had the promise of future favor; but those who did not believe were, and remained, in the same condition as if no promise had ever been given.

Christ, the promised woman's seed, came in the fullness of time, and shed his blood for the sins of the whole world. Those who believed on Him were changed in their relation to God by having their sins washed away. They were now sinners no more, but were called saints. They were made partakers of the merits and virtues of Christ, and in this changed relation were fitted to stand in the presence of God and enjoy fellowship with Him. The gift of the Holy Spirit was promised to these, by which their natures were changed by the shedding abroad of the love of God in their hearts. These now were brought into the relation to God in which man was before the fall. Self-love (that work of the Devil) was destroyed, and the love of God was shed abroad in the heart in its stead.

As the Law and commandments in the Old Testament were given to suit the circumstances, nature, and relation of man at that time, it is quite reasonable that, when this was so completely changed as to lead the Savior himself to call it a "new birth, a renewed, converted, or transformed" state, He should give him a different law and commandment from what he was under before. The first was not suitable to his present circumstances, and God gave him such as was suitable—and still does. God had given man no government before the fall. He needed none. Because he gave it to him after the fall is no proof that God had changed. Man had changed, but God had not. No more is it any proof that He changed because He gave man a new law in his new relation under the Gospel. That which made government necessary was taken away, a self-governing principle was reinstated, and His people needed government no more.

All men did not believe the Gospel. These were not changed. They remained under the old Law and relation they were in before Christ came. To these, government was still necessary, and they remained under the old Law and commandment, as they were before. Christ's commands are not given to these. This is the reason why the Savior and the Apostles still recognized government. But they mention nothing of government among themselves, and nothing of the conduct or duty of a believer in the government.

This is the reason why people lose their way in the Gospel. They look at the commands in the New Testament as though they were given to all men equally, and because government is recognized there, they cannot see how it can be conducted on non-resistant principles. But leave the government to those in and of the world, under the command that God gave them, and separate the kingdom of Christ and that of this world, and the solution is simple and easy. Christ has chosen his disciples out of the world. They have no promise of temporal good or happiness, but the contrary. Their promise is in the world to come. The spirit that they possess renders them happy and contented in any sphere of life. So long as the world tolerates them, they are contented; but if the world will not let them dwell in peace, they flee to another city or place; and so they are true pilgrims and strangers on earth, having no certain abiding-place. Their hope and prospects are in the world to come. They are well contented that the dead may bury their dead, if they are only permitted to follow

w Christ.

More often than not, when a brutal and oppressive government is overthrown by violent revolution, it is replaced by another brutal and oppressive government.

Musser failed to realize that there is a third way. Most believe that helpless obedience and violent rebellion are the only alternatives. Mohandas Gandhi proved that non-violent non-cooperation could drive out an oppressive colonial occupation. Martin Luther King, using the same means, did not bring down the US government, but did bring it into better agreement with the purpose for which God established it. Both were prophets to their nations, disobeyed their governments' immoral laws, spoke and acted against the systemic evil and corruption therein, and even bore the consequences – and the world was a better place.

Musser appears to contradict his earlier position, which was that Christians should not criticize government at all. He previously said, “... who would criticize the acts of those in authority ... would be looked upon with a great deal of suspicion,” and, “The duty of His children is the same ... whether the Government has dealt justly or unjustly.” Later he says that we must pay any tax or give any material thing that the government may require, irrespective of what the government intends to do with it.

Musser condemns this contribution because it was made voluntarily, as he subsequently explains. The three hundred dollar commutation fee and other war taxes were compulsory.