

DOCTRINE OF THE ROYAL IMPERATIVES

- I. Introduction.
 - A. The imperative carries with it a forcible tone of command.
 - B. In the Greek world, this was clearly understood and it was never employed in communications from an inferior to a superior.
 - C. The apostles, and their associates in the chain of command, did not regard it as appropriate to address their hearers or readers with softened commands or requests.
 - D. Therefore, since Christ spoke with authority (Luk.4:31-32), those that are appointed by Him and speak in His name naturally speak in a similar fashion.
 - E. The imperative is the mood of command, the mood that demands volition.
 - F. It expresses the appeal of one's will to another's will, but expresses neither probability nor possibility for compliance, only intention.
 - G. It is used in active commands and prohibitions, and all tenses demand action.
 - H. The tenses do not imply differences of time, but denote only the stage of the action with the general rules being:
 - 1. The present imperative implies continuance: "Continue on..."
 - 2. The aorist imperative refers to simple occurrence: "Start..."
 - 3. The present imperative with the negative prohibits the continuance of an action: "Stop..."
 - 4. The perfect imperative (rare) deals with completion and the permanent result: "Do, and as a result..."
 - I. There are 1,625 imperatives found in the NT. (*The good news is that this includes the Gospels, Acts and Revelation and is not the total of Royal imperatives incumbent on believers in the Church Age.*)
 - J. Certain epistles contain a greater number of imperatives including, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus and James (this epistle has far more imperatives than any other). (*2Corinthians is the epistle with the fewest number of imperatives [4.9 per 1000 words] as compared to James [31.5 per 1000 words].*)
 - K. While the general form in which we would expect to find commands is the imperative, one must recognize that other forms are used to communicate orders such as the aorist subjunctive with the negative to denote prohibition.
 - L. In addition, the participle and the future tense are both recognized as having imperative force in certain contexts and these are no less binding. Luk.10:27 (future indicative of "shall love"); Heb.10:25 ("not forsaking" and "encouraging" are both present active participles.)

II. Definition.

- A. The Royal imperatives are those commands that are expressly stated in the Word of God, and specifically limited to the period of the Church Age.
- B. We will deal with those imperatives found in the epistles, excluding the Gospels, Acts (excepting the issue of deacons) and the Revelation. (*This is due to the fact that some could legitimately argue that the Gospels and much of Revelation occur during the Age of Israel, and Acts deals with the transition period.*)
- C. This does not mean that commands in the OT or the gospels are not binding on the believer in the Church Age merely because they were given in another dispensation.
- D. However, if a command from another dispensation is binding, one can be rest assured that it will be taught in the Epistles.
- E. The Royal imperatives express what the directive will of God is in the various situations that arise in the course of the CWL.
- F. It should be evident that a believer cannot, and is not to be expected to execute all of the imperatives at one time or perfectly every time.
- G. However, a believer can effectively not be in violation of all of the royal imperatives at any given point in time (FHS). Cp.Jam.2:10
- H. This study should make it abundantly clear that the believer must be informed, discerning, and willing to critically evaluate all that comes into his periphery, in order to come up with the correct application for each situation.

III. The Royal imperatives as related to volition.

- A. The Christian way of life is dependent upon volition that exists in the believer, since the Lord makes demands upon each of us.
- B. There is no purpose in making a demand if there is no possibility to do otherwise.
- C. That this possibility exists proves that freedom of choice is inherent.
- D. The Royal imperatives set the limits and give direction to the believers in their Christian walk.
- E. The CWL is primarily to be the result of the willing response of each believer to the grace of God, which they have personally experienced in their life.
- F. Nevertheless, Jesus Christ made it perfectly clear that the love that we proclaim for the Lord is to be evaluated based on the realities of executing the demands that He makes. Joh.14:21-24
- G. Therefore, our love towards God is no greater than our ability to understand and execute the imperatives.
- H. All that God requires of each believer i.e. that which pleases Him, is fulfilled in the believer that is in fellowship. Rom.8:4
- I. However, one cannot hope to continue in the filling of the Holy Spirit if he is not aware of “the commandments”. 1Joh.3:24

IV. Concerning God.

A. Concerning His Person.

- 1.** We are to fear God. 1Pet.2:17
- 2.** We are to boast only in Him. 1Cor.1:31; 2Cor.10:17
- 3.** What we do, we are to do with His glory in mind. 1Cor.6:20; 10:31; 1Pet.4:16
- 4.** We are to avoid allowing other things to take His place. 1Cor.10:7,14; 1Joh.5:21
- 5.** We are not to be ashamed of God or His plan or those that are advancing it. 2Tim.1:8

B. Concerning our prayers to Him. Phi.4:6; Col.4:2; 1The.5:17; 2The.3:1; Jam.1:5-6; 5:13,16; 1Pet.4:7

C. Concerning His Word.

- 1.** We are to pursue intake of BD. Rom.12:2; Col.3:16; Jam.1:21; 1Pet.2:2; 2Pet.3:18
- 2.** We are to pursue application/Divine good production. Tit.3:14; Jam.1:22; 3:13; 1Pet.3:11
- 3.** We are to pursue spiritual growth and the MAJG. Phi.2:12; 1Cor.14:20; 2Cor.13:11; 2Pet.1:5-10

D. Concerning the filling of the Holy Spirit, we are commanded to get in, stay in, and conduct ourselves in fellowship. Gal.5:16; Eph.5:18; 1Joh.2:24,27,28; Jud.21

E. We are not to quench or grieve the H.S. Eph.4:30; 1The.5:19

F. We are to emulate/imitate the example of God, and His Son Jesus Christ, conducting ourselves as He would. Eph.5:1-2,8,17; 1Pet.1:15

G. Concerning faith/rest.

- 1.** We are commanded to submit ourselves to God's plan. Rom.6:19; Jam.4:7; 1Pet.4:19
- 2.** We are to acclimate to our niche, allowing God to make any changes in it. 1Cor.7:17,18,20,21,23,24,27; 1Pet.5:6
- 3.** We are commanded to be patient and leave the outcome of all things to Him. Rom.12:19; 1The.5:15; Jam.5:10

H. Concerning the Lord's table in remembrance of our salvation provided.

- 1.** We are commanded to partake. 1Cor.11:24-25,28
- 2.** We are commanded to be in FHS. 1Cor.11:28
- 3.** Abuse is strictly forbidden. 1Cor.11:33-34

I. Concerning financial support of His plan. 1Cor.16:1-2; 2Cor. 8,9

- 1.** The participants.
- 2.** The time.
- 3.** The basis.
- 4.** The regularity.

V. Concerning church leaders.

A. To the Pastor-teacher.

1. He is to pursue the godliness code. 1Tim.4:7, 6:11; 2Tim.2:22; 3:14
 2. He is to study. 1Tim.4:14; 2Tim.2:15; 4:2
 3. He is to be wholly devoted to the Word of God. 1Tim.4:15,16; 6:20; 2Tim.1:13-14
 4. He is to teach. 1Tim.4:11,13; 6:2; Tit.2:15
 5. The methods prescribed.
 - a. Exhortation: To exhort, to excite, to incite to a particular action or course of action. 1Tim.4:11; 5:1,7; 6:2; 2Tim.4:2; Tit.2:6
 - b. Commands. 1Tim.6:17
 - c. Repetition. 2Tim.2:14; Tit.3:1
 - d. After the manner of a herald: To proclaim with formality, gravity, authority and in such a way as to make it plain that you are to be listened to and obeyed. 2Tim.4:2
 - e. Reprove: To verbally point out a fault or faults and make the person aware of it making them come face to face with it and experience the appropriate shame. 2Tim.4:2; Tit.2:15
 - f. Rebuke: To verbally seek to put a halt to, to curb the desire to do or continue in a course of action. 2Tim.4:2
 6. He is to avoid unprofitable subject matter. 1Tim.4:7; 6:20; 2Tim.2:16,23; Tit.3:9
 7. He is not to allow his age to be made an issue. 1Tim.4:12
 8. He is to model the doctrine that he teaches. 1Tim.4:12
 9. He is to be keenly aware of his own STA and monitor it carefully. 1Tim.4:16
 10. He is to absolve himself honorably in the A/C. 1Tim.6:12,20; 2Tim.2:1,3; 4:5
 11. He is to instruct the next generation of P-T's. 2Tim.2:2
 12. He is to shepherd his own flock. 1Pet.5:2ff
 13. He is to oversee accusation/discipline within the local church. 1Tim.5:19
 14. He is to be impartial. 1Tim.5:21
 15. He is not to ordain someone without due consideration. 1Tim.5:22
- B.** To deacons.
1. With the exception of teaching and extent of authority, many, if not all, of the items that are incumbent on the P-T are binding for the deacons. 1Tim.3:8, "*Likewise...*"
 2. Deacons are to be tested before being placed in office. 1Tim.3:10
 3. Their specific responsibility is to alleviate the P-T of any necessary physical tasks in order for him to devote himself to the study/teach routine. Act.6:1-4
- C.** To the congregation towards their leaders.

1. Each believer should recognize their spiritual leaders and be cognizant of their function. 1Cor.4:1; 16:15-18; Phi.2:29; 1The.5:12-13; Heb.13:7
2. Believers are to obey their spiritual leaders. Heb.13:17
3. Each believer is responsible to provide physical blessing for those that labor as spiritual authorities. Gal.6:6; 1Tim.5:17
4. Believers are to imitate the example of their P-T. 1Cor.4:16; 11:1; Gal.4:12; Phi.3:17; 4:9; 2The.2:15
5. Believers are commanded to provide full joy for the P-T by reflecting the attitude of Christ. Phi.2:2ff

VI. Concerning church policy.

A. Regarding organization.

1. All things are to be done in an organized fashion. 1Cor.14:40
2. No female pastors or deacons. 1Cor.14:34-35; 1Tim.2:12
3. The local church corporately is to abstain from any involvement in the traditions of men not sponsored in the Epistles. 1Cor.11:2; Col.2:8; 2The.2:15

B. Regarding widows/orphans. 1Tim.5

1. The local church is responsible to help those that lack resources. 1Tim.5:3
2. Their family is to practice this first. 1Tim.5:4,16
3. We are to refuse young widows. 1Tim.5:11
4. We are to help those 60 or older. 1Tim.5:9

C. Regarding the Royal family in other adjusted local churches.

1. Provide appropriate greetings. Rom.16:3-16
2. Provide appropriate hospitality. 1Cor.16:10-11; Heb.13:2
3. Prayer. Col.4:12-13
4. Apply Divine good when our own priorities are intact. Gal.6:10; cp. 1Tim.5:10

VII. Regarding the Royal family of Lake Erie Bible Church.

A. The correct MA.

1. Lack of contempt. Rom.14:3
2. No judging regarding one's exercise of their freedom in Christ. Rom.14:1-10
3. No desire to offend in non-essentials. Rom14:13
4. Lack of arrogance. Rom.12:16
5. As exemplified by Christ. Phi.2:5
6. Towards those under separation. 2The.3:15a
7. Love. 1Pet.1:22; 2:17
8. Mercy. Jud.22-23
9. One viewpoint. 2Cor.13:11

B. The correct speech.

1. Done with edification in view. 1Cor.14:12,26; Eph.4:29; 1The.5:11
 2. Express verbal solidarity. Rom.12:15
 3. Provide comfort. 1The.4:18
 4. Encourage/exhort. 1The.5:11; Heb.3:13
 5. Towards those under separation. 2The.3:15b
- C.** The correct actions.
1. Willing reception. Rom.14:1; 15:7
 2. Not flaunting liberty at the expense of a weak believer. Rom.14:15,20; 15:2; 1Cor.8:9; 10:32
 3. Associate with those “beneath you”. Rom.12:16
 4. Hospitality. Rom.12:13
 5. Financial and logistical aid when necessary.
 6. Live in peace. 2Cor.13:11; Heb.12:14
 7. Restoration to Godliness. Gal.6:1
 8. Bear other’s burdens. Gal.6:2
 9. Kindness. Eph.4:32
 10. Forgiving when wronged. Eph.4:32
 11. Sharing. Heb.13:16

VIII. Concerning outsiders. Rom.12:17-21

- A.** Concerning the establishment COC. Rom.13:1,3,7; 1Pet.2:13,17
- B.** Concerning the Jews. Rom.11:18
- C.** Concerning the Gentiles. Rom.12:17-21; Col.4:5; 1Pet.2:12
- D.** Concerning the workplace. 2The.3:10
 1. If you are a boss. Eph.6:9; Col.4:1
 2. If you are an employee. Eph.6:5; Col.3:22-23; 1Tim.6:1-2
- E.** Concerning separation. 2Cor.6:14-17
 1. From false teachers. Rom.16:17; 2Tim.3:5; 2Joh.10
 2. From the cosmos. Rom.12:2; 2Cor.6:14-17; Eph.5:7,11; 1Joh.2:15
 3. From reversionistic believers. 1Cor.5:7,13; 2The.3:14
 4. From defiling activities. 2Cor.7:1
- F.** We are to act as salt among the cosmos. Col.4:5-6
- G.** We are to show appropriate honor for all men. 1Pet.2:17

IX. Concerning marriage and family.

- A.** Marriage partners.
 1. Husbands in the local church. Eph.5:25,33; Col.3:19
 - a.** Spiritual and disciplinary responsibility over the children. Eph.6:4
 - b.** Spiritual responsibility to the wife. 1Cor.14:35
 2. Wives. Col.3:18; 1Pet.3:1,3
 3. Both. 1Cor.7:3,5
 4. The marriage vows. 1Cor.7:10,39
 5. Separation. 1Cor.7:11,12,13,15

- B. Unmarried believers. 1Cor.7:8-9,36
 - C. Parents. Eph.6:4; Col.3:21
 - D. Children. Eph.6:1-2; Col.3:20
- X. Personal imperatives for every believer.**
- A. Concerning the mental attitude.**
 - 1. The correct MA qualities.**
 - a. Fear of God. Rom.11:20
 - b. We are to be clear on the non-essentials. Rom.14:5,22
 - c. Steadfast in BD. 1Cor.15:58; 16:13; Phi.4:1; 1Pet.5:12
 - d. Alert. 1Cor.16:13; Heb.3:12; 1Pet.5:8
 - e. Inner strength. 1Cor.16:13
 - f. Love. 1Cor.16:14; Heb.13:1
 - g. +H. 2Cor.13:11; Phi.2:18; 4:4; 1The.5:16; 1Pet.4:13
 - h. Reflecting on pre-salvation state and the grace we are under. Eph.2:11
 - i. Focused on Ph₃. Col.3:1,2
 - j. Compassion. Col.3:12
 - k. Kindness. Col.3:12
 - l. Humility. Col.3:12; 1Pet.5:5
 - m. Gentleness. Col.3:12
 - n. Patience. 1The.5:14
 - o. Thankfulness. Col.3:15
 - p. We are to consider the Person and work of Christ. 2Tim.2:8; Heb.3:1; 12:3
 - q. We are to receive and avoid reactor factors to DD. Heb.12:5; 12-13
 - r. We are to reflect on the joys of the CWL when under testing. Jam.1:2
 - s. We are to be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. Jam.1:19
 - t. We are to be impartial. Jam.2:1
 - u. Righteous anger. Eph.4:26
 - v. What to think. Phi.4:8
 - 2. The wrong MA qualities.**
 - a. Arrogance. Rom.11:20
 - b. Foolishness. Eph.5:17
 - c. Surprise at suffering. 1Pet.4:12; 1Joh.3:13
 - 3. Things we are to know.**
 - a. Concerning prophecy. 2Tim.3:1; 2Pet.3:8; Jud.17
 - b. Concerning God's love. 1Joh.3:1
 - c. Concerning faith. Gal.3:7
 - d. Concerning restoration. Jam.5:20
 - B. On verbal activity.**
 - 1. The correct verbal activity.**

- a. Admonish: To urge by a warning. 1The.5:14
 - b. Comfort. 1The.5:14
 - 2. The incorrect verbal activity.
 - a. Lying to one another. Col.3:9
 - b. Generally anything not edifying or STA activity. Jam.4:11
- C. On overt activity.
 - 1. We are to conduct our lives with SG₃ in view. 1Cor.9:24
 - 2. Men are to act like men: Possess and demonstrate positive qualities, courage, reliability, levelheaded, consistency, dignity, maturity. Opposites include childish, cowardly, effeminate, irresponsible. 1Cor.16:13
 - 3. All things are to be done under Divine love. 1Cor.16:14
 - 4. We are to examine ourselves periodically. 2Cor.13:5; Gal.6:4
 - 5. We are to receive comfort. 2Cor.13:11
 - 6. We are to resolve conflicts daily. Eph.4:26
 - 7. We are to model patience. Phi.4:5
 - 8. We are to help those that need it. 1The.5:14
 - 9. We are to exercise impartiality. Jam.2:12

XI. Concerning the Angelic conflict.

- A. Primarily we are to be aware of the A/C and be prepared for what comes our way.
- B. We are to resist Satan and his viewpoint. Jam.4:7
- C. We are to be alert for his attacks at all times. 1Pet.5:8
- D. We are to arm ourselves for the conflict. Eph.6:10,11,13,14,17
- E. We are to be critical and discerning. 1Joh.4:1-2

XII. Concerning the STA.

- A. The WOG recognizes the functional existence of the STA in each believer throughout his or her Ph₂. Rom.5:12
- B. Believers are commanded to recognize and deal with the STA by refusing its solicitation to evil. Rom.6:13; 13:14
 - 1. The STA is not to be placed in the rulership position. Rom.6:12; Eph.4:22
 - 2. The STA is to be dealt with based on positional truth. Rom.6:11; Col.3:5
 - 3. The STA, and its salvation's, is to be rejected by:
 - a. Removing them. Eph.4:31
 - b. Putting them off. Col.3:8
 - c. Running away. 2Tim.2:22
 - d. Holding back. 1Pet.3:10
 - e. Turning away. 1Pet.3:11
- C. When we succumb to the STA we are to rebound and move on. Jam.4:8
- D. We are to confess our sins to other believers for the purpose of edification. Jam.5:16

- E.** We are to be aware that practice of STA activities adversely affects our SG₃ package. 1Cor.6:9; Eph.5:5
- F.** STA activity is the basis for God's judgment and we are not to be persuaded otherwise. Eph.5:6
- G.** We are to recognize that STA activity is not limited to just the lascivious side of men, but is inclusive of human good and human viewpoint. 2Tim.3:5
- H.** Specific STA activities we are commanded to avoid:
 - 1.** Revenge tactics/cursing. Rom.12:14,19-21
 - 2.** Excessive debt. Rom.13:8
 - 3.** STA deception. 1Cor.3:18; Gal.6:7
 - 4.** Inappropriate boasting. 1Cor.3:21
 - 5.** Inappropriate judging. 1Cor.4:5
 - 6.** Sexual sins. 1Cor.6:18
 - 7.** Complaining/gripping/bitching. 1Cor.10:10; Phi.2:14; Jam.4:11; 5:9
 - 8.** Resorting to legalism(s). Gal.5:1; Col.2:8,16,18
 - 9.** Using our liberty in Christ as a cover for STA activity. Gal.5:13
 - 10.** Lying. Eph.4:25; Col.3:9
 - 11.** Stealing. Eph.4:28; 1Pet.4:15
 - 12.** Rotten speech to include human viewpoint. Eph.4:29
 - 13.** Drunkenness. Eph.5:18
 - 14.** Worry. Phi.4:6
 - 15.** The anger complex. Col.3:8; Jam.1:19
 - 16.** The love of money. 1Tim.6:11
 - 17.** Those things that characterize the immature/youthful STA natures. 2Tim.2:22
 - 18.** Failure to keep your word. Jam.5:12
 - 19.** Murder. 1Pet.4:15
 - 20.** Meddling. 1Pet.4:15
 - 21.** Inappropriate shame. 1Pet.4:16
- I.** We are to be aware that God is in no way connected with the STA and our temptations. Jam.1:13,16
- J.** We are not only to avoid STA activity; we are to avoid the very appearance of impropriety. 1The.5:22

XIII. Conclusions.

- A.** This categorization of imperatives is not fully complete.
- B.** However, this should cover almost any situation that a believer may find himself.
- C.** One can see that the "commandment is exceedingly broad". Psa.119:96
- D.** Nevertheless, His commandments are not burdensome to the believer that desires to do His will. 1Joh.5:3; Mat.11:28

- E.** We may objectively evaluate ourselves and others based on these commands and the execution of them. 2Cor.13:5-6
- F.** Many of the Royal imperatives carry promises that are associated with their application. Eph.6:2-3
- G.** All carry the promise of SG₃ if they are executed in fellowship. Gal.6:8
- H.** Each believer must know the commandments in order effectively to remain in fellowship. 1Joh.3:24
- I.** The believer that walks in the F/HS is the only one that can effectively fulfill the righteousness required by the Law of God. Rom.8:4
“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make our abode with him.
Joh.14:23