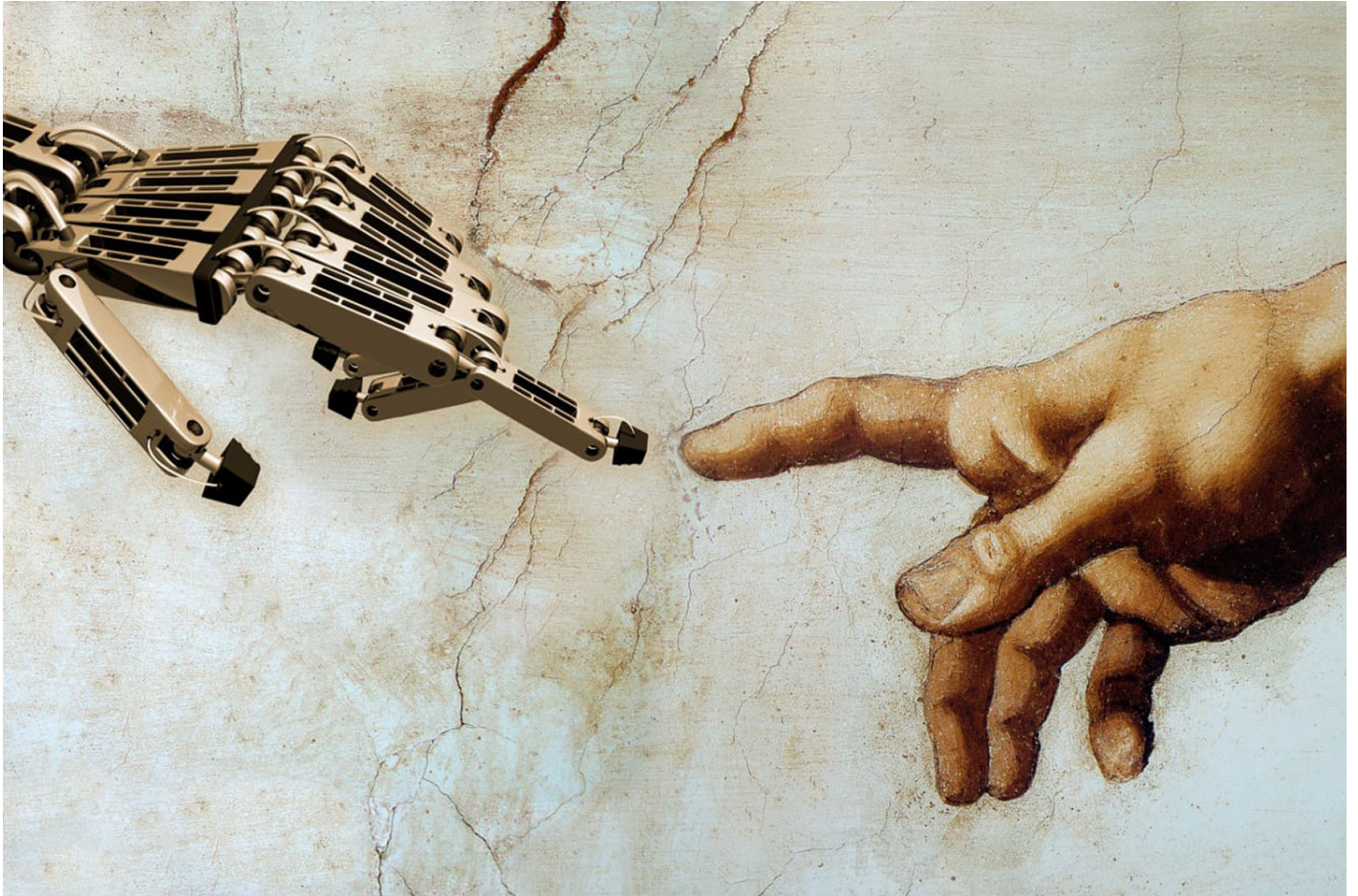


# Who Created Whom? Part 3

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## **Christ Exposes the False God of Law and Order**

One precursor is needed for the rule of law to exist: sin.

Without the resulting chaos, fear of death, tribal and personal conflict, and selfish human behavior that sin creates, there is no need for a codified law. Investigation, judgement (in the judicial sense), retributive justice, and punishment, have no meaning without sin.

Rule of law does not exist in sacred space (the sinless holiness of God's presence); it would have no utility. Imposed law has utility only in a profane existence (a sinful world). In sacred space, there is no fear of non-existence because there is no sin. Without fear, there is no selfishness and no chaos. Without chaos, there is no need for God to establish a system of behavioral norms and consequences that He must inflict upon the deviant so that citizens may experience safety and stability. Without a system of imposed law and order, there is no place for the use of power and coercion to incentivize and punish people to elicit proper behavior. Without a need to punish people, there is no need for penal justice.

The rule of law is the best we have in this fallen world. But law-and-order governance is a result of sin, and it functions based on sinful principles. Instead of truth, love, and freedom, the principles of God, the rule of law is based on codes of conduct, the implied contract of group membership, and enforcement (justice).

God exists in holiness, in sinlessness; where His principles are in perfect operation, there is no sin. God and His design for life stand apart from our profane existence. How could God have the character, thought processes, principles, requirements, and behaviors that exist only because of sin and that exist only in our profane dimension? Any notion that would promote the idea that God is like us is a part of Satan's strategy, even if those who teach this lie have good intentions.

Pagan belief systems typically are polytheistic (many "gods"). And structured law and order with a strong hierarchy of power isn't common among them. Pagan gods tend to do what they want, when they want, without accountability—like, unsurprisingly, the sinful humans who invented them.

The three major monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) developed strongly around the idea of a single god of law-and-order. It shouldn't be surprising that two of the most dominant and far-reaching cultures in pre-modern history, after the Romans, were the Holy Roman Empire (Catholic Europe) and the Umayyad Caliphate (Islam). A strict and jealous god of law and order brought great strength to these cultures, with self-serving intent.

The condition of sin, the infection of fear and selfishness in humanity, made Satan's work easy. In fact, we did the rest for him—as he knew we would. We couldn't help it. Fear made us do it. For earthly authorities and their peoples, the rule of law has worked brilliantly. This lie about a god of law and order was strengthened as those in power (e.g., Constantine) invoked the name of God, but not His true character, for their own purposes. Satan's strategy for a divine god-king created in the image of man grew stronger and stronger.

By the time of the Enlightenment (1687, Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica*), 1,375 years had transpired since Constantine's victory at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD (an early formative event of the Catholic Church). The extensive time period and dominance of the Catholic Church since that event solidified this perverted version of God's character—to such a degree that there was no going back. Indeed, the Reformers were so marinated in the rule-of-law god construct that they were focused on the trees (minor disagreements with Catholicism) and never saw the forest (the perverted image of God). The ideology of the separation of church and state that found its way into newly formed secular governments didn't help to address the error either.

We have seen secular humanism push back on Christianity in particular because of the church's legalism and portrayal of a harsh, vengeful god. This doesn't make secular humanism right, of course, but neither does it make wrong the criticism of the Christian imperial dictator god.

Guided by the same unfolding revelation of truth that occurred during the Reformation, Seventh-day Adventist reformers, such as E.G. White, A.T. Jones, and E.J. Waggoner, were guided away from the god of law and order toward a greater light—advancing a theology organized around the Creator God, whose law is design law, and taught real righteousness (transformation of heart). However, this revolutionizing view of righteousness was rejected by the law-and-order adherents in the Adventist Church at the 1888 General Conference, and the church has never recovered from it.

But the message to worship Him who made the heavens, earth, sea, and fountains of water, which is a

call to reject the rule-of-law god and embrace the Creator, is still there for those who want to see it and embrace it.

I find it telling that God's call to come out of spiritual Babylon is a reference to the Babylon of Hammurabi, the "lawgiver." God is calling us out of the false religion of the rule-of-law god and back to Creator worship!

The rule-of-law god of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam has existed, without serious challenge for centuries—except by the life of Christ. Jesus revealed that the character and government of God is distinctly different than the punishing god of law and order, a deity promoted and practiced by both the Jews and Romans of His day.

The world of Roman law and order in Christ's time was brutal—and extremely effective in worldly terms of success. The Jews were subjugated harshly by the Romans. A number of secular scholars have argued that Jesus was a political activist, a member of the rebellious Zealots. While He may have had acquaintances who were Zealots, there is no biblical evidence that Jesus intended to use His influence to gain temporal justice for the Jews.

And His mission, once revealed, disappointed many Jews, including some of His disciples, who were looking for a Messiah that would be a political and military leader, righting the wrongs of the brutal Roman occupation.

While the Romans crucified Christ, Pilate's behavior illustrates that Christ didn't run afoul of the law and order of the Romans; rather, He ran afoul of the authority and theology of the hypocritical Jewish religious leaders. Jesus served as an antagonist for them and their version of God, not the Romans and their governance systems.

If Jesus (God) were focused on revealing to mankind that the most righteous and effective form of governance was law and order, then His mission certainly would have been as a political and military leader. On the contrary, His life revealed a humble acceptance of the law and order of the Romans as yet another tragic result of this sinful state of existence. His focus was on exposing the perversion of the character of God by the Jewish spiritual leaders, which is why they brought Him to the Romans to execute Him.

Christ often healed individuals from disease and disability, which serves as a metaphor for the healing from sin (spiritual disease and disability)—the healing of hearts, minds, and characters. People are not able to assess each other's hearts, minds, and characters, so the outward, physical healing served as a powerful metaphor for internal, spiritual healing. Such ministry indicated that Jesus was not an activist determined to use political force to reform the Jewish rule of law. His intention was not to start a new denomination with a new-and-improved version of the rule of law, one merely concerned with outward behavior. While He certainly encouraged people to "go and sin no more," He knew that real change would come only by forgiveness and the revealing of truth, which is the only healing that changes hearts, minds, and characters for eternity.

Human rule-of-law governance might be viewed as a necessary evil in an evil world. Indeed, the Bible seems to endorse the rule of law when such government serves to restrain evil and limit suffering in sinful societies (Romans 13). The problem, however, is that mankind has projected our need for externally enforced law and order, a product of sin, onto God Himself—and we have built our theologies around it. This was Satan's plan all along—to confuse the sacred with the profane, a god of law and

order that is feared and obeyed out of the threat of non-existence, rather than loved and worshiped as Creator and Healer of our sin condition.

The damage done has been immense: hundreds of generations of humans believing in a god that is nothing more than a superhuman version of earthly rulers, one who is little different than every pagan god invented by mankind; living and dying in fear; desperately believing that a legal transaction would ensure their place in the afterlife, rather than a relationship with a loving God who can justify (set right) their characters.

Godless evolution, atheism, the death of God movement, and secular humanism can be viewed as reactive responses to the vengeful god of law and order that sits at the head of Christianity and Islam today. These anti-religious superstitions and philosophies are the consequence of the damage done to millions of souls, who needed to find alternatives to the harsh god of law and order—again, perfectly in line with Satan’s plan to maintain the separation between God and humanity that Jesus came to bridge.

Human moral code (rule of law) has always been dependent on the relative values, assumptions, and stresses facing a given society, and the common practice in history has been to attribute those arbitrary laws to God as the religiopolitical ruling authority. Such a system called theocracy; and until the formation of the United States and the French Revolution, many of the world’s cultures had embraced theocracy of one form or another. Today, much of the world benefits from the separation of church and state, largely due to the influence of the United States Constitution and its First Amendment.

However, our current religions and theologies—Judaism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism—were formed within human-designed theocracies, serving as a coercive tool of the state in order to keep it in power. A state’s rule of law directly influences the theology of the state religion. I believe hard times and stress have the potential to push what might be tolerant governance ideology back towards theocracy. Of course a theocracy with a false god in charge. We’ve seen this in unstable regions of the world in our lifetimes - Serbia/Croatia, Rwanda and various Muslim countries. The culmination of this tendency could very well be a description of last day events.

The roots of mainstream Christianity’s theological foundations are still deep in the soil of the most powerful and longest-lasting theocracy in human history: the Catholic Church. Its legal transaction view of salvation was patterned directly after human law and order, and it has used this coercive power to enrich itself at the expense of its flock, a pattern widely seen in Protestant churches that have adopted the Catholic view of legal salvation.

The rule-of-law god was a useful adaptation that humanity invented to compete, dominate, and survive in this sinful state. The stresses of earthly life and our dependence on the rule of law for survival has reinforced the concept that God thinks and behaves as we do when faced with “law-breakers.” We have a hard time envisioning anything else.

However, I believe the good news (the gospel), as illustrated by Christ, is the illumination of the critical difference between the two views of God—a loving Creator whose laws are design protocols for life versus an imperial dictator god whose laws are made-up rules no different than what sinful beings enforce.

Once you start examining God through the design law lens, rather than the law-and-order lens that most people are born into, everything becomes clear. At one point, I had given up on the religion that I was born into because when I had taken it apart to see how it worked, I couldn’t put it back together in a

meaningful, logical way. And I didn't have an alternative, until I was introduced to the Creator God a second time and the design-law concept.

I challenge you to examine these things for yourself and reject this corrupt rule-of-law god and embrace fully our Creator God of love.