

Anarchy (Pt. 1): The Character and Cunning of the Destructionist

BY JOHN L. KACHELMAN JR.

The term “destructionist” is rarely used in the common language. Yet it identifies the focus of this study. By definition it refers to “one who delights in destroying that which is valuable, or whose principles and influence tend to destroy existing institutions; an advocate of the destruction of an existing political institution or the like.” Thus, the focus is upon a person who is determined to “deconstruct” the existing framework that sets boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable behavior and beliefs.

The world has always been tempted by the cunning Destructionist attempting to “change” or “rethink” or “redefine” issues. Their objective is to “deconstruct” the old and “reconstruct” the new. They display an arrogant anarchy.

The root of all specific evils is anarchy—the rejection of the rule of law for civility. An observation of the evil events and characters that have blackened the history of civilization reveals that anarchy was the governing impetus. Beginning with The Satan’s temptation of Eve and progressing to the current disruption of civility in our world, all is focused on rejecting what God says and supplanting what man wants. This is illustrated by Eve’s rejection of God’s rule for anarchy’s governing, *“(T)he woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat”* (Genesis 3:6).

Eve decided to govern her choices and behavior on what she “saw,” on what she “thought” would result, on what she “desired” for self, and to obtain what she wanted with the least work and effort on her part. She wanted to be “wise.”

Such is the undisputable analysis of anarchy—it urges people to cast aside God’s Rule and follow the deceptive promises of self-satisfaction.

The problem with anarchy is that it never works. It never satisfies. It never brings happiness. It always brings ruin.

ANARCHY’S HISTORIC SECULAR ILLUSTRATION

A study of the dark pages of civilization repeatedly illustrates the despair of anarchy. Whether it is the savagery of Attila, or the Mongol Khans, or the barbarism of the pagan Nordic hordes, the conclusion is the same—lawlessness brings disastrous consequences. There is no way to offer a revisionist’s commentary that can applaud the evils of anarchy.

The unimpeachable Truth remains—in order for mankind to enjoy life, so as to find peace and blessings and happiness and success, man MUST follow a system of Law that governs belief systems and conduct. Within society there MUST be clarity in distinguishing what is right and what is wrong. As long as those in society submit to the Rule of Law, then all is good. A failure to submit to the governing Rule of Law brings catastrophe.

This point is illustrated by what historians call “The Terror” that resulted from the French Revolution. In that dark historical context the rise of anarchy resulted from a repudiation of the Rule of Law. The practice of anarchy impacted the most basic levels of daily life. The rejection of the Rule of Law and the governing by anarchy has accurately been described as “The Terror.”

One has made this astute analysis of the development leading to “The Terror.” “It is ironic that of all countries in Europe, France was the only one that could have

had a revolution—not because she groaned under the lash of tyranny, but, on the contrary, because she tolerated and even invited every conceivable dissension and heresy. Restlessness, a passion for novelty and the pursuit of excitement were everywhere in the air. They were the fruits of idleness and leisure, not of poverty.” (Lomis, 11-12)

Did you notice that the initiating cause of this evil period was the rejection of an absolute Rule of Law and the acceptance of the very spirit that Eve’s sin revealed? Anarchy cast aside rules and followed “every conceivable dissension and heresy.” The general population was encouraged to live with “restlessness, a passion for novelty and the pursuit of excitement.” The general public was urged to reject completely the Rule of Law that had guarded civility.

The French Revolution is not the only instance of this evil. It is one of the clearest illustrations; but, tragically, it is not unique in civilization. As shown from the Garden account, anarchy has tempted and damned mankind “from the beginning.” History reveals that through the centuries anarchy has changed its vocabulary of enticing words to persuade unthinking man to follow its illusions.

Anarchy clearly appears when one is looking retrospectively at its terror and ruin. It is unbelievable how some are so blind to anarchy’s illusions when they are caught in its snare. It is sobering to realize that eventually all following anarchy will be exposed as instigators of lawlessness and their evil influence will continue to bring lawlessness to society. (A good illustration of this point is King Manasseh who ruled Judah with an anarchist’s agenda. Ultimately he came to see his evil and repented, but his pattern of anarchy continued to damn those he influenced—2 Kings 21:1-17; 2 Chronicles 33:10-17.)

A contemporary illustration of the delusion of anarchy is found in the words of the elected leader of the world's greatest superpowers. The comment (January 20, 2015) said, "I have done what I thought best for this nation." Notice that his governing principle was not the nation's Rule of Law (The Constitution he had sworn to uphold) BUT it was "what I thought best." No other phrase frighteningly summarizes the evil disdain for the absolute Rule of Law.

Anarchy's evil leaven compromises all aspects of civilization. The abhorrence of rules is the most frequent form of anarchy in civil matters. But anarchy's abhorrence of rules is seen in every aspect of civilization (the home, government and especially religion).

The greatest tragedy that can befall a nation and drive it into total anarchy occurs when the Laws of the nation are mocked and citizens are told they can, with impunity, disobey a Law which they do not like.

Many are duped into rejecting the rule of order in their private lives thinking that what they do is "nobody's business." Consequently, "personal choice" becomes the governing and mockingly ignores all other standards. This form of anarchy has resulted in today's governing anarchy of "tolerance" in our society.

Anarchy has historically compromised religious beliefs and practices. Ever since The Satan deceived Adam and Eve in the Garden, man has often followed his own governing in religious faith and practices. I have heard people say, "I know what God's Word (the Bible) says BUT I think God is going to look at matters differently."

Even a casual reading of the Scriptures provides multiple illustrations of this fact. Man must not allow the governing of anarchy to direct him (Jeremiah 10:23; see Jeremiah 6:13-17 for a heartbreaking anecdote of this cancerous evil).

The greatest tragedy that can befall God's Church and drive it into total anarchy occurs when the Laws of God are mocked and Christians are told they can, with impunity, disobey a commanded practice or modify a faith principle which they do not like.

A contemporary illustration of the delusion of anarchy is seen in the words of some Elderships who confess "We have done

what *WE* thought best for this congregation to grow." But notice that their governing principle is not the Scripture's Rule of Law (The Bible) BUT it was "*what we think is best* to make this congregation grow." No other phrase frighteningly summarizes the disdain for the absolute spiritual Rule of Law.

ANARCHY'S DEVILISH SPIRITUAL DECONSTRUCTION

The two epistles to the Thessalonica Church are encouraging studies. The Church began in the midst of persecution. Paul was able to remain there only three weeks before fleeing for his life because of anarchy (Acts 17:1-9). But after Paul's departure the Thessalonica brethren demonstrated a tenacious devotion to God (1 Thessalonians 2:12-14).

The Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection were repeated points in 1 Thessalonians that offered the beleaguered brethren sustaining hope (the Second Coming is mentioned in every chapter of 1 Thessalonians). These doctrines emphasized that this troubled world is not our abode—we are transient and ultimately will find eternal abode in heaven. This hope sustained the brethren and guarded their hearts.

The point for our study is this—only by trusting, obeying and enforcing God's absolute Laws can one find a solid faith in a turbulent world.

Not long after he wrote the first epistle, the Apostle Paul sent the second epistle. Second Thessalonians contains only three brief chapters. The second epistle stresses two basic points to encourage Christians whose hope was wavering. Once again Paul focuses upon the Second Coming and then issues a strong caution regarding false doctrine.

The Church at Thessalonica remained faithful in spite of constant persecution (2 Thessalonians 1:3, 4). But it appears that some had infected the congregation with false doctrine that would degrade the hope that guarded their spiritual security.

Some had arisen in the congregation and advocated a gross misunderstanding about the Lord's Second Coming. This false

teaching had led to questioning God's promises (2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2). This false teaching had so affected the congregation that some lost all hope and consequently stopped working—they still attended the congregation and had interaction with the members but they were idle busybodies further weakening the congregation (2 Thessalonians 3:11, 12).

As Inspiration addresses this situation, Paul uses each of the three chapters to stress a single point that, when combined, present an encouraging lesson for the saints. He commends them for their steadfastness and faith (chapter 1) and then shows how their commendable faith should protect them from false teaching (chapter 2). He then concludes by urging them to act by faith and refuse error and not give up their faith and reputation (chapter 3).

Here is a message of hope that stresses how security and blessings result when Christians follow God's absolute Laws.

The Church in Thessalonians had suffered persecution from its beginning. They had witnessed Paul's persecution but had been encouraged by his trust in God's Word. They imitated his allegiance and stood fast even though beset by persecution. They were able to persevere because they were trusting in the hope of the Lord's return (2 Thessalonians 1:4). But now someone had "troubled" them with false reports about "the day of the Lord." This denied them the security of their "hope."

The point for our study is this—only by trusting, obeying and enforcing God's absolute Laws can one find a solid faith in a turbulent world.

ANARCHY'S DEVIOUS WORK

Paul's words detail how the brethren in Thessalonica were attacked by anarchy's evil.

Anarchy exists when there is a deliberate rejection of the absolute Rule of Law. As long as the governing Law remains enforced then civility will result and allegiance to order will be maintained. However, once the governing Rule of Law is first questioned and then suspected, the Anarchist (Destructionist) finds opportunity to sow his evil rebellion.

This process is well illustrated throughout Scripture. One of the clearest instances is

found in the failed attempt of the anarchists Korah, Dathan and Abiram as they sought to wrest the Rule of Law away from Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16:1-35. They planted evil questions regarding God's Law. They stimulated the suspicions that they had aroused and stirred rebellion. It is sadly amusing to note that these anarchists accused Moses and Aaron of taking too much authority (16:3) and yet they were seizing the arrogant authority to overthrow God's Rule of Law.

Those seeking to rethink and redefine God's Rule of Law today would do well to read again Numbers 16:1-35 and review the damnable destiny awaiting all who try to supplant God's Rule of Law!

How did anarchy attempt to supplant God's Rule of Law in Thessalonica? Their cunning scheme is exposed in 2 Thessalonians 2:2. They sought to replace the clear teaching of Inspiration with counterfeit truth. Some reported that Paul "said" the Second Coming was already past. Others claimed to produce a pseudo-epistle from Paul claiming the Second Coming was history. Paul's blunt response declared such "coming is in accord with the activity of Satan."

The devilish Destructionists utilized emotional appeals. The deceived brethren were led to trust in emotions and not the absolute Truth of God (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). And the inevitable end is that those thus deceived are damned "because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved (but followed) a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged (because they) did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."

Anarchy presents a tragic irony. It seeks to do away with all Law. It strives to promote absolute freedom. It condemns any exclusive boundaries. Yet, the Anarchist enforces his own Rule of Law! The real intent of the Anarchist is to deny God's order and to promote Self's order. This is the objective and is wholly focused upon SELF. It is relentless in satisfying Self. It is merciless and intolerant of anyone who does not applaud his arrogance.

Anarchy is not a Rule of Law to govern a population with civility but it is a Rule of Law that is based on selfishness. It presents a façade of justice but it is pure evil contrived by a self-serving arrogance (again review the "Reign of Terror" in

France to see a somber illustration of this fact).

In order to accomplish its dastardly result, anarchy must cause the governing Rule of Law to be first questioned, then suspected of error and finally to be discarded as a "past" event. This operational principle is true as anarchy seeks to destroy national governments. It is also tragically true as anarchy seeks to destroy God's spiritual governing.

This is why God repeatedly urges His followers to maintain Truth, teach Truth, uphold Truth, and defend the Truth. When people are ignorant of God's Truth then they are ruled by anarchy and destruction soon follows (see this situation addressed by Hosea 4:1-7).

How disconcerting it is to see God's People refuse to know God's Word and think they can escape the consequences.

ANARCHY'S EVIL SPIRITUAL RESULTS

The results of anarchy are pure evil. There is nothing good about abandoning the absolute Rule of Law to allow the gratification of self-centered desires. This point is clear in any governing context (national, personal, spiritual).

I want to focus on the evils that result when anarchy usurps God's absolute Truth in spiritual matters of belief and behavior.

First, the attack strategy of anarchy targets the confidence of Christians and strives to cause them to be "shaken" in their convictions. The word "shaken" is from the Greek term σαλεύω and means "to waver, to be agitated or rocked so that the object shaken is toppled or destroyed." It refers to an object being moved from a former position. It can also refer to a "stirring up" of a previously stable environment.

The Thessalonian brethren had found stability and confidence in the words of Inspiration. But false teachers had injected questions and suspicions and stability was missing. This resulted from teaching that was not based upon the Bible. The stability that brings blessings is not from one's "thoughts" or asking "how do you feel this applies" but from clear teaching about the behavior and belief that God's absolute Truth commands—a "thus saith the Lord!"

Once one leaves the absolute commands of God he becomes unstable. To the

Ephesians Paul would liken such to a piece of driftwood that is tossed about in any direction (Ephesians 4:14, 15).

When a congregation no longer adheres to the absolute Truth of God in matters of doctrine and practice they have been "shaken" and such instability brings only greater problems.

Second, the effectiveness of anarchy requires that the Rule of Law be "soon" replaced by the rule of self-willed arrogance. The word "soon" can also be translated as "easily." It comes from the Greek term ταχέως and refers to a sequence of time. The action that it describes occurs speedily or rapidly. Such occurs because those involved act hastily. Those in a congregation affected by the Destructionist (Anarchist/Change Agent) are dazed at the chaos and the dramatic changes that mark their worship and practices. They shake their heads saying, "How did happen so quickly?"

The situation described by this adverb occurs because a hasty response was made. In the context of 2 Thessalonians the hasty action was the "shaking" of the brethren's confidence in God's Truth. They lost the firm assurance because they quickly forgot the Truth that Paul had taught. Thus Paul chided them by saying, "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (2:5)

When a congregation quickly accepts the redefined doctrines or the "revisited" practices of the New Testament Church, they are following the same mistake that the brethren in Thessalonica did. God's Truth never changes. But the Anarchist must persuade Christians that Truth can change and that they must do it quickly.

Once the Anarchist's propositions and his new-found understanding is measured by a study of God's Word, it will be exposed as false. So the Anarchist must persuade his targeted victims to act hastily and without a study of the Scriptures.

It is critical for the Christian to remember that anarchist changes in one's culture provide the foundation for anarchist changes in the Church! Once culture has lost the war with anarchy and the absolute Rule of Law ceases to govern secular civility, then it will only be a brief time before anarchy invades and destroys the spiritual Rule of Law. This is why Paul urges us, "And do not be conformed to this

world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2).

Third, the method of anarchy is to cause Christians to be "troubled." The term "troubled" comes from the Greek word θροέω, throēō, and refers to a deep mourning of one's spirit. It causes him to wail or clamor in distress at what is going on in life. It refers to a fear caused by insecurity. One thus allows fear to control life so that faith is overruled; excited efforts are made to quiet the fear that is causing the distress.

In spiritual issues this occurs when Christians are induced to accept a troubling anxiety about the beliefs and practices of the Church. They are led to believe that the "old paths" are leading to futility, lessening numbers, and ultimately a disappearance of the Church! So fear (troubling) causes decisions to be made to trust upon man's worldly wisdom and not God. Inspiration's commands are set aside for anarchy's arrogance.

This is what happened in Thessalonica and Paul immediately addressed this fear. His inspired counsel was simple, "Do not be goaded by fear and think that God's absolute Truth is not applicable to your situation! Do not surrender to troubling times but trust absolutely on God's commands!"

Such a message speaks to every congregation of God's People today! Do not surrender the absolutes of faith because you are "troubled" by factors that draw your sight away from God's Truth. If today's congregations allow their faith and practice to be "redefined" by anarchy, they will never find comfort in the conviction of God's absolute Truth but instead will discover constant irritants and unsettling personalities (See 2 Peter 2:9-19).

Christians should not be "troubled" (fear; be apprehensive or anxious) by the Destructionist. Those who seek to turn us away from the absolute Truth of God's Bible cannot provide the comfort that is found in following the absolutes of God's Bible. God's righteousness reigns from the heavenly throne—God is the Almighty Sovereign and presides in all earthly affairs (Habakkuk 2:20). This is a security that cannot be found in anarchy's

deconstruction of biblical belief and behavior.

Fourth, the tool of anarchy is deception. This is a shocking fact. We have the Holy Scriptures to provide understanding and insight yet many are quick to follow what is contrary to the Scriptures. These are convinced that the "old" must give way to the "new." They openly embrace the Destructionist's agenda and with shocking speed they leave God's Truth for anarchy's arrogance.

Their deception leads to a complete change in belief and practice.

This amazing change is because The Satan has manipulated the surrender of biblical allegiance by "deception." The English word for "deception" is translated by the Greek term εξαπατάω and means "to cheat" or "to thoroughly deceive." The thought communicated describes one that is so deceived that he accepts falsehood for the Truth. And he believes error MORE than he believed Truth (See Colossians 2:4, 18). In James 1:22 the word is παραλογίζομαι and means "to miscalculate." It refers to being beguiled by mere probability.

Adding emphasis to this calamity are the somber words with which Inspiration offers a more complete explanation of the doom awaiting those who surrender God's absolute Truth to anarchy's evil arrogance. "And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12).

The tragedy of the evil spiritual Destructionist is summarized in these few words: They do not LOVE the Truth and thus they will perish!

ANARCHY ANSWERED AND REJECTED

Inspiration is never silent regarding how Christian's are to address those seeking to destroy the foundations of God's absolute

authority. In addressing the same attack against God's authority in the Church in Crete, Inspiration commanded, "For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Titus 1:10, 11; see also Titus 2:7, 8).

The point to note from Inspiration's directive is found in the Greek term ἀνυπότακτος (anupotaktos). This refers to one who is unsubdued, insubordinate, disobedient to the revealed commands and consequently has a self-governing authority (anarchy) that is refuses to put self's actions under authority; unruly.

The Scriptures portray mankind involved in an unrelenting spiritual war that calls all to become soldiers in either God's army of righteousness or the Satan's army of destruction.

There is no neutral ground. There is no common ground upon which a ceasefire agreement can be reached so that all can "live in peace."

The Destructionist is governed by The Satan's mandate. This requires a total destruction of God's pattern and then a reconstruction of a religious pattern that is far different from what God had commanded. (Note: This conflict is often seen in the myriad of military terms and metaphors that urge Christians to persevere and go forward. Such is indeed an intriguing and rewarding study of the behavior and actions required from God's People but we do have the space or thesis for it in this paper. However, we will reference a few of these and urge readers to explore this point further in their own study).

Paul writes to the brethren in Thessalonica who were confronted with anarchy's efforts to destroy God's commanded belief and behavior, and urges them to confront the efforts of the Destructionist. Three points immediately arise...

First, Christians must maintain fidelity to the absoluteness of God's revealed Truth. This attacks the most critical foundation of belief and practice. God's revealed truth (the Bible) is the governing authority that commands belief and practices that please the Almighty God. As long as one follows this governing standard, God will be

pleased. However, it is this governing authority that the Destructionist seeks to discredit and replace with his anarchist's agenda.

This challenge is well illustrated by John 18:38. Pilate asked the question that anticipated the cultural situation in our day—"What is Truth?" Many really believe there is no absolute Truth; all is relative and depends upon feelings. This prevailing philosophy in modern culture is generally accepted. All have come to believe that "it does not matter what one believes as long as they are sincere and loving."

Amazingly, this philosophical outlook is evidenced in modern culture. Today's culture is allowed to dictate and applaud actions that are blatantly contrary to what the Scriptures teach. This philosophy is evidenced in politics, diplomacy, business ventures, personal choices, legal courts AND religious practices. Many will admit there is a disconnect between what the Bible teaches and what religious people profess and practice. Why have things changed? Because of the same reason the Thessalonians were being "quickly shaken"—confidence is not based upon God's Word (See Exodus 32:8).

How does true Science validate natural truth? It is not upon the personal whims and feelings of the individual but upon the tried and repeated testing that results in the same conclusions. This same process is the only way to validate spiritual Truth. God has given us an absolute criterion by which spiritual judgment is confidently based.

Today people thoughtlessly repudiate the old standards. Once Truth is discounted or redefined then catastrophic events will come (see Hosea 4:1-6 for a description of the practical reality of a society that refuses to follow God's revealed word).

Notice the following words that Inspiration deliberately chose in telling Christians how they must confront the anarchy of the Destructionist.

"Stand fast" (2:15) comes from the Greek term *στήκω* (*stēkō*) and communicates the idea that one remains stationary or perseveres. That action leads one to stand fast; to stand firm in faith and duty. This is used in an absolute sense and means there is no acceptable reason for one NOT to do this.

"Hold" (2:15) comes from the Greek term *κράτew* (*krateō*). This word communicates the idea that one is using great strength (a strenuous effort) to seize or retain or keep, obtain, retain, or take by strength. This describes an aggressive energy (See 2 Timothy 1:13). The Christian is NOT congratulated on his ability to find common ground or to appease those opposed to God's absolute standards but is commended for holding the Truth in an uncompromised way.

This term means the Christian is to show a strong loyalty to the revealed commands of God in belief and practice. When it comes to the Bible one must be in complete control; one must be the master because of an understanding of its precepts. One is not to allow the lessening of the Scriptures in its governing. One must seize, cleave to, strictly observe and guard the Holy Scriptures in belief and behavior.

"Traditions" (2:15) is a despised term for the Anarchist. The bitter rejection of God's traditions comes because the Destructionist must repudiate the basic governing of beliefs and behavior in order to reconstruct the "new" governing order. Thus, the Destructionist assumes the role of a "Change Agent" as he seeks to deceive and change God's commands.

The word "traditions" is from the Greek term *παράδοσις* (*paradosis*) and refers to a process of transmission of a precept, ordinance, or practice.

God's Truth rests upon "traditions" (2:15). God's Church is commanded to follow "traditions." We cannot discount this by using absurdities that have evolved in the religious community and say "all traditionalism is wrong" (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; Titus 2:7).

The Bible is very clear on this point—2 Thessalonians 2:15 "So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours." Also pay close attention to this verse, "(I)n all things showing thyself an ensample (pattern) of good works; in thy doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity" (Titus 2:7).

Inspiration's emphatic reminder to struggling saints is to find security in the divine absolutes—"the traditions" taught by Inspiration NOT the pleasing rhetoric of worldly minds (1 Corinthians 2:1ff).

Note: There are "traditions of men" that are contrary to God's Law (see Matthew 15:9; Mark 7:7). The Destructionist mocks the traditions of God by placing the divinely commanded traditions on the same level as the absurd traditions of man. Their evil is magnified as they reduced the sovereignty of the Almighty God to the absurdities of man's ignorance. How frightening it is to contemplate the Divine wrath one will face because he rejected God's traditions and he urged others to reject the commanded beliefs and practices with mocking scorn and contempt for the holy!

Such is inexcusable and should be instantly challenged and never coddled!

"Taught" (2:15) references the fact that God's commands (traditions) must be communicated! God's People are an educated people. Faith is founded upon knowledge that provides an absolute assurance (1 John 5:13).

A failure to teach always results in a failed society. The Dark Ages were the natural consequent to the ignorance that controlled the population. The historic apostasy of the Church resulted because of the failure of man to know God's Word. God's People are always a people of education—they stress learning; they begin schools; they focus on "knowing" the revealed Truth; they "know the Book."

"By word or Epistle" (2:15) validates the fact that God's governing authority rests upon the process of Inspiration. God's Truth was revealed by inspired communications that were committed to writing. The written Word becomes the absolute governing authority in religious belief and behavior. If mankind wishes to enjoy a civility that proves peace, security, and personal joy then he must follow the written Word as the absolute governing in every aspect of society.

"Pattern" (Titus 2:7) is a word that elicits the greatest vehemence from the Destructionist. It is the "pattern" of God that the Anarchist loathes. The Destructionist/Change Agent cannot say enough to deride "pattern theology." Regardless of what the raging enemy of God's governing pattern may say, he cannot deny the Truth that God has provided mankind with a "pattern" of what to believe and practice!

The term “pattern” is from the Greek word τύπος (typos) and refers specifically to a form that is to be followed. It is used to communicate a die or a stamp by which replication is to be made. (Can you imagine one who would say that those manufacturing parts for a car’s engine do not have to cast the parts according to the die? And yet the Destructionist has convinced many that one does not have to follow the die that God has provided for His Church!). The term “pattern” is also used in reference to one replicating a shape, a statue, a style or resemblance. Specifically, it is used to describe a model that is an imitation.

God’s governing expects man to follow God’s directives. He has provided us the model; He has given us the shape and style to replicate. It is God’s blueprint for what HE desires and He expects us to follow the directives without any modification (Revelation 22:18, 19; see these illustrations of what God expects from those who have His pattern Genesis 6:22; 7:9b; Exodus 25:40; 31:11b; 34:11; 39:5, 7, 21, 26, 29, 31, 32, 42, 43; 40:16-32 etc).

The Christian should strive for his service to be presented to God as was Israel’s after they constructed the Tabernacle. “And Moses examined all the work and behold, they had done it; just as the Lord had commanded, this they had done. So Moses blessed them” (Exodus 39:43).

Second, Christians must maintain faithfulness to our pledged allegiance. When one confesses Christ as the Son of God, as commanded by God, that is a statement of allegiance (Matthew 10:32, 33). A failure to maintain that pledged allegiance is an act of treason and must be treated as a heinous act.

There are two specific areas where Christians must maintain a faithful loyalty to God’s plan. These areas are often attacked by those seeking to change God’s order with their destructionist agenda.

First, we must maintain faithfulness to the Word of God. Paul’s concern for the Thessalonian brethren is simply stated, “So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours” (2 Thessalonians 2:15). The Apostle’s point was that the Church can only maintain its allegiance IF it follows the revealed directives of God. These are taught by the

Inspired verbal Word and Inspired written Epistles.

This same emphasis is found in Titus 1:9 where the Greek term ἀντέχομαι (antechomai) is used. There Inspiration states, “(H)olding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers.” Inspiration chose a word that stresses Christians are to be opposite from others who contradict and deny God’s governing commands for belief and behavior. In contrast to those who mock and treat with contempt the commands and practices of God, the Christian is to adhere to, care for and support the “faithful Word of God.”

Second, there must be faithfulness to the commanded order. This explains HOW Christians maintain faithfulness to the Word of God. One faithfully holds to the Word of God by maintaining the order that God commands for His Church.

An emphatic verse for this study is 2 Thessalonians 3:6 “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.”

There is a definite “order”—one can be “disorderly.” Proper order is essential and expected from those who are following God (1 Timothy 3:15).

The term “disorderly” is from the Greek word ἀτάκτως (ataktōs) and refers to action that is disorderly or insubordinate to the governing commands. It is taught that those who are not living according to the apostolic traditions are NOT obeying God. Their lives do NOT reflect submission to God but a rebellion against God. Used in 1 Thessalonians 5:14, it refers to the insubordinate—the one “out of step” with the teachings of God.

“To violate the rules (of Inspiration’s traditions) is to ‘walk disorderly’—to break the ranks; to fall out of line. The value of the individual soldier is the degree in which he keeps in order and acts in perfect harmony and precision with the rest of the regiment. A breach of military rule creates disaster. Let the believer keep the Law and the Law will keep him” (Barlow, 576).

The idea communicated is that one demonstrates an irregularity with the known standards. This term defines

“disorderly conduct.” How is one’s conduct “disorderly”? They are “disorderly” when irregular with the prevailing law. The same point applies to one’s religious beliefs and practices—they are “disorderly” when irregular with the revealed will of God taught either by Word or Epistle!

Note: The practicality for this “order” in the Lord’s Church is essential because the Church is in a war and a failure of any army to maintain order results in its quick destruction. Each Christian must walk in step with the traditions that were delivered by Inspiration—these are our marching orders! Any stepping out of order must be addressed or he will be lost and possibly be the cause of other’s defeat (Galatians 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:1-6).

“If all efforts to recover the recalcitrant fail, then the Church has the highest authority for separating completely from the society and fellowship of such. Continued communion with them would not only seem to condone their offence, but destroy discipline, and put an end to all moral consistency” (Barlow, 576).

This order is based upon the sovereign rule of the Almighty God.

“Command/Charge” has a military sense to it. It references an order issued by the Commander to the troops. This order must be obeyed. It comes from the Greek term παραγγέλλω (paraggellō) and refers to transmitting a message that enjoins, charges, commands or declares (See 1 Timothy 1:18). The stress of this word is an absolute authority...there is no redefining the “commands.” Inspiration chided those who were quickly shaken by saying, “You have been taught...and the teaching has not changed!”

“Order” is also a military term referencing the command and control that is essential for an army to be victorious. The stress of this word is that each is to “walk in step” and remain “in line” with the Commander’s orders so the unit will not fall into disarray and be defeated.

Those following God’s governing will maintain the proper order by following the same commands. Those not following God’s governing will destroy the order and demonstrate disorder (which is the consequence of anarchy).

The use of the term “walketh disorderly” (2 Thessalonians 3:6) is translated from the Greek term ἀτάκτως

(ataktōs). This adverb describes an immoral irregularity that has caused a disruption of the previous order. The Destructionists are not content to submit to God's commands in belief and practice. They arrogantly walk "out of step" with God's revealed Word. Their practice is described as a continuous rejection (being constantly out of rank and file) with God's Word. Their behavior is a stubborn practice that will not change. "Walketh" is a present participle indicating constant action. Thus some are intent on following constantly a religious pattern that is not approved of God.

Another text that corroborates Paul's counsel to the Thessalonians is in Titus 1:10. The English term "unruly" is translated from ἀνυπότακτος (anupotaktos). This describes one who is unsubdued by authority. He is insubordinate or disobedient and is not content to put himself under authority. He is unruly.

Third, Christians must maintain a fellowship that is intolerant of the Destructionist's agenda. In order for a fighting force to find victory there must be a trusting, cohesive camaraderie that performs in an orderly fashion. In the Lord's Church this is described as "fellowship." In order for the Lord's Army to be victorious there must be a cohesive uncompromised fellowship.

The Destructionist recognizes this critical fact. His priority is to compromise the exclusive fellowship of God. By doing away with God's definition of fellowship the Destructionist redefines fellowship and establishes boundaries condemned by God's authority (see 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 for a discussion of this point).

For those seeking to deconstruct New Testament Christianity the issue of fellowship must be reconstructed. The Destructionist has accepted the false premise that absolute Truth is deniable and that practical Truth is a matter of personal choice and situation. Consequently there are no firm behaviorisms expected. Each is allowed to do whatever he chooses (Judges 17:6) and there are no immoral behaviors.

Consequently, the Destructionist (a.k.a. Spiritual Anarchist; Change Agent) denies that one can walk disorderly or be insubordinate or be subversive to God's will, as long as he is sincere and following

some contrived understanding of "love." Today's emphasis is that sincerity and "love" is the only governing criteria. And... anarchy has triumphed over steadfast fidelity to God's Word!

Consequently the Church has been compromised. And a compromised Church becomes WORSE than members in a pagan group (1 Corinthians 5:1; 2 Peter 2:20-22). An astute observation notes four facts about the disorderly in the Church (Barlow, 577).

1. The disorderly in the Church violate the rules that give compactness and strength to all Church organization.
2. The disorderly in the Church ignore the highest examples of moral consistency.
3. The disorderly in the Church should be faithfully warned and counseled.
4. The disorderly in the Church, if incorrigible, should be excluded from the privilege of Christian fellowship.

ANARCHY'S EVIL THREAT TO MODERN CHRISTIANS

The Thessalonica brethren faced a dire situation...new babes in Christ they were being pulled away from God's Truth by those seeking to supplant the governing authority of God's Scriptures. Consequently doubt was planted; discouragement was present; disillusionment with their eternal hope (resurrection) was evident. As a result of God's authority being questioned, the congregation faced these perils—instability in faith issues and insecurity in their doctrinal beliefs. Paul addressed these issues so the Church would be pulled back from the disastrous ruin approaching.

Second Thessalonians is a marvelous study with a very practical meaning for today's Church. It emphasizes the urgency of submitting to God's authority in our beliefs and behavior!

Two practical results arise when God's holy doctrines, that regulate belief and behavior, are destroyed by the Deconstructionist.

First, the Destructionist discourages work in the Church (3:13). It is commonly suggested that some had stopped working because they were awaiting the Second Coming. From the context it would be reasonable to see that those quit because

they had lost all hope—they were totally discouraged. The Second Coming had been the basis for their perseverance under trials. But now they faced the false teachers who said this hope was gone. So they just quit. Instead of being productive members in the congregation they were siphoning its energy and resources. Paul urged them to remember how he, Timothy and Silas behaved when confronted with discouraging actions—they continued to be active and loyal to God!

When the true beliefs and behaviors commanded by God are denied then those who had hope in such are disheartened. False doctrine never edifies. It always destroys.

Those seeking to deconstruct the absolute Truth of the Bible will attack and destroy the basic foundations of belief and behavior. A look at the "liberal" or "progressive" churches validates this fact—such are populated by the "takers" and not the "givers." When a financial need for preaching the gospel's doctrine arises, it will NOT be funded by those clamoring for change. The Destructionists never donate the money and sacrifice the energy to help the Church fulfill its obligation. Pure anarchy does not care for others because it looks only at self!

An amazing fact is observed in congregations where the Destructionists (Change Agents; Anarchists) are at work. Often the elders listen to the malcontents and change the belief and behavior of the congregation thinking that such a change will yield more workers, greater attendance, and increased giving. But such does not ever happen because the character of the Destructionist (Change Agent; Anarchist) does not care for the standards of the "old" system. They accept these small, incremental changes and continue to press for the complete deconstruction they seek. When the elders agree to these initial "small" changes it only whets the appetite of anarchy!

Compromise is never satisfied with "common ground." A common ploy of the Anarchist is to present himself as seeking common ground upon which all can agree. Such a position claims that the objections of the Anarchist to beliefs and behavior are legitimate and that failure to grant legitimacy to these self-willed desires is wrong.

The Anarchist presents himself as innocent and seeking “common ground” and those refusing to allow the deconstruction of the beliefs and behaviors are “ignorant legalists.”

This reminds me of a fable I heard a long time ago. It told of a hunter seeking to kill a bear because the hunter wanted a fur coat. The hunter came upon a bear and was about to shoot it when the bear said, “What are you doing?” The hunter said, “I want a fur coat.” The bear replied, “Well I’m hungry and I want a full belly.” After further discussion the bear said, “I think I have the answer to our situation and both of us can get what he wants (the bear was offering the hunter “common ground”). The hunter agreed to listen to the bear. And then only the bear was present at the end as he was sitting by the camp fire the hunter had built—the bear was enjoying his full stomach and the hunter was inside a warm fur coat!

Compromise is NEVER an option for God’s Church! Carefully notice the words of Joshua as he urged Israel to remain firm against the enticements of compromise (Joshua 24:13-24). The significant term in this great address is the phrase “but we will serve the Lord” (verse 15). The word “serve” refers to work that is done by one “enslaved” to another.

The basic idea is that the servant has no authority to change his service. No change to any extent. The servant is to execute the Master’s directives without modification. Israel had a choice as to whom they would “serve” (be enslaved to). They could be enslaved to paganism or they could be enslaved to their own desires or they could be enslaved to the Lord God Almighty. Joshua’s family was very clear—they would be enslaved ONLY to the Lord God Jehovah! No compromise. No seeking “common ground.”

Second, the Destructionist faces God’s fury (1:7-9). 2 Peter 2:9-19 offers one of the most terrifying verdicts upon those who are “self-willed and daring” (the Anarchist; Deconstructionist; Change Agent). “The Lord knoweth how...to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment...Daring, self-willed, they tremble not to rail at dignities...these, as creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and destroyed, railing in matters whereof they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be destroyed...

spots and blemishes, revelling in their deceivings while they feast with you...enticing unstedfast souls; having a heart exercised in covetousness; children of cursing; forsaking the right way, they went astray...uttering great swelling words of vanity, they entice...promising them liberty, while they themselves are bondservants of corruption.”

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Today’s Church lives in a culture that is rabidly anti-Christian. We live in an age of bitter hatred toward the Bible’s teachings. We are bombarded with teachings that contradict the Scripture. Biblical ignorance, in the Church, is appalling. AND, it appears that the majority of church members have no concern about spiritual knowledge.

So what do we do? Do we ignore the situation? Do we shrug our shoulders and say that we do not agree and then allow the tragic situation to devolve further?

Paul’s response to this danger in Thessalonica illustrates what we are to do:

Address the issue as soon as you learn about it!

- Use God’s revealed Word to confront the challenges that anarchy presents!
- Do not ignore its evil or pretend it is a passing fancy!

A failure to confront and challenge invites compromise and destruction!

There is no neutral ground. There is no common ground upon which a ceasefire agreement can be reached so that all can “live in peace.”

2 Thessalonians urges Christians to encourage, exhort, affirm one another to live loyal, devoted and obedient lives in the face of invitations to relent and compromise. This requires (challenges) us to do two things...

Reach out and affirm one another—fellowship! Fellowship with other saints helps us to maintain a divine perspective.

Be sensitive and perceptive to other brethren—involved! In 2 Thessalonians 1:4 we find the term “perseverance” which is from the Greek word ὑπομονή and refers to being hopeful; displaying endurance

and constancy. This is a compound word and means to “bear up under a heavy load.” One is greatly burdened but does not quit. He remains steadfast and surefooted.

There is only one secure foundation for mankind struggling through earthly life—“the Rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:2). Only by following God can we find the security to trust absolutely in the Truth that the Lord is “faithful” (2 Thessalonians 3:3). When we believe and practice God’s authority in our lives, only then can we be absolutely confident God’s sovereignty!

Just as our brethren in Thessalonica, we face false teachings that undermine our confidence. It may not be in regard to the resurrection or end of times theology, but there are those who are doing their best to rethink and redefine and restudy biblical doctrines. And their sole purpose is to destroy the foundation of Truth that has provided God’s Church with confidence, security, and boldness.

When life threatens with discouragement that invites disillusionment and a lessening confidence in God’s promises, turn to 2 Thessalonians and reread these three chapters. That will give you hope in the midst of hopelessness! Do not allow Satan’s discouraging situations and the Devil’s evil associates (the Destructionists; Change Agents; Anarchists) to tempt you to respond “quickly” and surrender your confidence in God. Do not be removed from the security He promises you! “(B)e not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled” (2 Thessalonians 2:2)!

Regardless of what goes on in the world, Inspiration urges Christians to follow the actions commanded in 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15...

1. Maintain a strict fellowship
2. Believe a solid doctrinal system
3. Remain active and trusting in God’s revealed Will and urging others to follow it.

Sources Cited:

Lomis, Stanley. *Paris in the Terror: June 1793-July 1794*. Philadelphia & New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia & New York, 1964.

Barlow, George. *The Preacher’s Homiletic Commentary*, Vol 28. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978

John L. Kachelman, Jr. Searcy, Arkansas john@kachelman.com