

DOCTRINE OF THE ROYAL IMPERATIVES

- I. Introduction.
 - A. The imperative carries with it a forcible tone of command, which involves at least two volitions, and carries with it the imposition of one's will on another.
 - B. In the Greek world, this was clearly understood; therefore, the imperative was never used in communications directed to a superior from an inferior.
 - C. The apostles, as well as their associates in the chain of command, did not always regard it as appropriate to address their hearers or readers with softened commands or requests.
 - D. Therefore, since Christ spoke with authority (Lk. 4:31-32), those that are appointed by Him and speak in His name should not be afraid to speak with the authority He has delegated to them. II Cor. 13:10; Tit. 2:15
 - E. It is used to express intention, the appeal of one's will to another's will.
 - F. Since it does not express any indication of probability for compliance, it is the Greek mood most removed from certainty.
 - G. It is used in active commands and prohibitions, with the active commands outnumbering the prohibitions by around five to one.
 - H. In that regard, the things we should do are far fewer than the things we should not do; it makes sense to keep track of what we should be doing, since that should be our focus anyway. Jn. 13:1
 - I. While all tenses of the imperative demand action, the tenses do not imply differences of time; the force of the imperative involves somewhat different nuances depending on which tense is employed:
 - 1. The present imperative is generally used to command the action as an ongoing process.
 - 2. The aorist imperative is generally used to command the action as a whole, without focusing on duration, repetition, etc.
 - 3. The present imperative with the negative may prohibit the continuance of an action that is in progress; however, this is not always the case. Matt. 19:6; I Cor. 7:12
 - 4. The perfect imperative (rarely used) deals with completion of the command and the permanent result. Mk. 4:39
 - J. There are 1,820 imperatives found in the New Testament. *The good news is that this includes the Gospels, Acts and Revelation and is not the total number of Royal imperatives incumbent on believers in the Church Age.*
 - 1. Certain epistles contain a greater number of imperatives including, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, and James, which has the most imperatives of any New Testament book.
 - 2. II Corinthians is the epistle with the fewest number of imperatives (4.9 per 1000 words) as compared to James (31.5 per 1000 words).
 - 3. Also, some imperatives are directed toward a single individual in a singular circumstance, and do not apply to believers in general. Acts 10:13; II Tim. 4:11,13; Rev. 1:17,19
 - K. While the general form in which we would expect to find commands is the imperative, one must recognize that other forms are used for commands and prohibitions.

1. The aorist subjunctive is used with the negative to denote a prohibition.
2. The participle and the future tense are both recognized as having imperatival force in certain contexts, which would make them no less binding. Lk.10:27 (future indicative of ἄγαπάω); Heb.10:25 (“not forsaking” and “encouraging” are both present active participles.)

II. Definition.

- A. The Royal imperatives are those commands that are expressly directed toward and binding upon believers that live in the Church Age.
- B. We will deal with those imperatives found in the epistles or within the first three chapters of the Revelation.
 1. This is based on the fact that some could legitimately argue that the Gospels and much of Revelation occur during another dispensation--the Age of Israel.
 2. It is clear that many of the imperatives in the Old Testament (or imperatival constructions) are not incumbent upon believers in the Church Age. Ex. 29:1, 31:13; Lev. 1:2ff, 2:1ff
 3. Similarly, some of the imperatives found in the Gospels are not incumbent upon believers in our dispensation; however, that does not mean that certain principles are not valid for us. Matt. 5:24, 6:16, 8:4
 4. The Book of Acts deals with the transitional period of the early Church Age and some of those imperatives are not applicable to the Royal Family today. Acts 5:20, 8:26
- C. However, this does not mean that moral commands in the Old Testament or the Gospels are not binding on the believer in the Church Age merely because they were given in another dispensation.
- D. Those moral commands that were issued in other dispensations that are binding upon the believer are very often (always?) repeated within the epistles. Rom. 12:19—Prov. 20:22; Rom. 12:20—Prov. 25:21; Rom. 13:9—Ex. 20:13-17; ICor. 5:13—Deut. 13:5
- E. The Royal imperatives express what the directive will of God is in the various situations that arise in the course of the Christian way of life.
- F. It should be evident that a believer cannot, and is not, expected to execute all of the imperatives at one time.
- G. This means that he is to deal with each individual situation as it arises and apply the particular imperative that he knows to be appropriate. IJn. 5:16; Jude 22-23
 1. Obviously, the greater the frame of reference the believer has, the greater his ability to know what is appropriate for a given situation is.
 2. Also, because there are conflicting imperatives, the believer needs to use and refine his level of discernment. Phil. 1:9; Heb. 5:14
- H. Further, there is no indication that even the greatest believers did not fail and perfectly fulfilled all the Royal Imperatives at all times. Acts 21:4,10-11,14; Rom. 7:21-23
- I. 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 determine the correct application for each situation.

- III. The Royal imperatives as related to volition.
- A. The Royal Imperatives bring together the volition of God, who issues authoritative commands, and the volition of man, who is to respond to those commands.
 - B. There is no purpose in making a demand if there is no possibility of compliance with the demand, just as there is no purpose in prohibiting something if there is not a possibility that it could occur.
 - C. That these possibilities exist forms a clear indication that volition is a reality, and that it is an issue in the Christian way of life.
 - D. The Royal imperatives provide God's standards and give direction to believers in their Christian walk.
 - E. While the Christian way of life should consist of the willing response of each believer to the grace of God, it is clear that God continues to provide instruction and guidance to believers through these commands.
 - F. Jesus Christ made it quite clear that the love we proclaim for the Lord is to be evaluated based on the realities of executing the commands He issues. Jn.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, that which pleases Him and satisfies His righteous demands, is fulfilled in the believer while he is in fellowship. Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16
 - I. The Royal Imperatives (particularly the prohibitions) provide guidance, serve to define sinful activity, and lets the believer know when he is out of fellowship. Rom. 7:7-12; IJn. 3:24
- IV. Imperatives relating to God.
- A. Concerning His Person.
 1. We are to fear God. IPet. 2:17
 2. We are to boast in Him. ICor. 1:31; IICor. 10:17
 3. We are to conduct ourselves with His glory in mind. ICor. 6:20, 10:31; IPet. 4:16
 4. We are not to allow other things to take His place. ICor. 10:7,14; IJn. 5:21
 5. We are not to be ashamed of God, His plan, or those that suffer for communicating His plan. IITim.1:8
 - B. Concerning prayer. Phil. 4:6; Col.4:2; IThess. 5:17; IIThess. 3:1; Jam. 1:5-6, 5:13,16; IPet. 4:7
 - C. Concerning His Word.
 1. We are to pursue the intake of Bible doctrine. Col.3:16; Jam.1:21; IPet. 2:2; IIPet. 3:18
 2. We are to pursue Divine good production. Tit. 3:14; Jam. 1:22, 3:13; IPet. 3:11
 3. We are to pursue spiritual growth and the maturity adjustment. Phil. 2:12; ICor. 14:20; IICor. 13:11; IIPet. 1:5-10
 - D. Believers are commanded to get in, stay in, and conduct themselves in fellowship. Gal. 5:16; Eph. 5:18; IJn. 2:27,28; Jude 21
 - E. We are not to quench or grieve the Holy Spirit. Eph. 4:30; IThess. 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; IPet. 1:15
 - G. Concerning faith/rest.
 1. We are commanded to submit ourselves to God's plan. Rom. 6:19; Jam. 4:7; IPet. 4:19
 2. We are to acclimate to our niche; we are to allow God to make any changes He desires, but we are not to seek to manipulate our niche. ICor. 7:17,18,20,21,23,24,27; IPet. 5:6
 3. We are commanded to be patient and leave the outcome of all things to Him. Rom. 12:19; IThess. 5:15; Jam. 5:10

- H. Concerning the Lord's table, as we consider the person and work of Christ.
 - 1. We are commanded to partake. ICor. 11:24-25,28
 - 2. We are commanded to be in fellowship ICor. 11:28
 - 3. Abuse of this ritual may result in Divine discipline. ICor. 11:27-34
 - I. Concerning the financial support of God's plan. ICor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 8,9
 - 1. The participants—**each one of you.**
 - 2. The timing—**on the first day of the week.**
 - 3. The basis—**as he may prosper.**
 - 4. The regularity—**every week.**
- V. Concerning church leaders.
- A. To the Pastor-teacher.
 - 1. He is to pursue the godliness code. ITim. 4:7, 6:11; IITim. 2:22
 - 2. He is to remain loyal to the body of truth, which was entrusted to him. ITim. 6:20; IITim. 1:13-14
 - 3. He is to devote himself to study. ITim. 4:14-16; IITim. 2:15, 4:2
 - 4. He is to teach God's truth to positive volition. ITim. 4:11,13, 6:2; Tit. 2:15
 - 5. The methods prescribed.
 - a. Exhorting: to encourage, to excite, to incite, or to urge someone to a particular action or course of action. ITim. 4:11; 5:1,7, 6:2; IITim. 4:2; Tit. 2:6
 - b. Commanding; he is to issue appropriate commands to those under his charge. IIThess. 3:6, 12; ITim. 1:3, 6:17
 - c. Repetition; he is to remind believers of certain truths as he deems necessary. IITim. 2:14; Tit. 3:1
 - d. After the manner of a herald: he is to proclaim the doctrine with formality, gravity, authority and in such a way as to make it plain that he is communicating for the King, Who expects obedience. IITim. 4:2
 - e. Reproving: he is to verbally point out faults with the necessary force, making the person aware of it, and pressing them to deal with the failure. IITim. 4:2; Tit. 2:15
 - f. Rebuking: he is to verbally seek to put a halt to, to curb the desire to do something, or continue in a course of action; this term is somewhat stronger than reproof in that it expresses strong disapproval and can even mean to punish. IITim. 4:2
 - 6. He is to avoid unprofitable subject matter and stick with the text, or related doctrines. ITim.4:7, 6:20; IITim. 2:16,23; Tit. 3:9
 - 7. He is not to allow his age to be made an issue. ITim. 4:12
 - 8. He is to seek to model the doctrine that he teaches. ITim. 4:12
 - 9. He is to be keenly aware of his own STA, and monitor it carefully. ITim. 4:16
 - 10. He is to conduct himself honorably in the angelic conflict. ITim. 6:12,20; IITim. 2:1,3, 4:5
 - 11. He is to instruct and prepare the next generation of communicators. IITim. 2:2
 - 12. He is to shepherd his own flock. Acts 20:28; IPet. 5:2ff
 - 13. He is to oversee all accusations, and the administration of discipline within the local church. ITim. 5:19
 - 14. He is to be impartial. ITim. 5:21
 - 15. He is not to ordain someone without due consideration. ITim. 5:22

- B. To deacons.
 1. With the exception of teaching and extent of authority, the rest of the items that are incumbent on the pastor-teacher are binding upon the deacons. ITim. 3:8, **“Deacons likewise.”**
 2. Deacons are to be tested before being placed in office. ITim. 3:10
 3. Their specific responsibilities include performing the necessary physical tasks in the local church in order to allow the pastor-teacher to devote himself to the study/teach routine. Acts 6:1-4
 4. While the congregation initially put the men forward (as per the command to do so), it is clear that the deacons then derived their authority from the apostles, who had the final word on ordination. Acts 6:3
- C. To the congregation towards their leaders.
 1. Each believer should recognize their spiritual leaders and be cognizant of their function. ICor. 4:1, 16:15-18; Phil. 2:29; IThess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7
 2. Believers are to obey their spiritual leaders (governors). Heb. 13:17
 3. Each believer is obligated to provide physical blessing for those that labor as communicators of doctrine. Gal. 6:6; ITim. 5:17
 4. Believers are to imitate the example of the pastor-teacher. ICor. 4:16, 11:1; Gal. 4:12; Phil. 3:17, 4:9; IThess. 2:15
 5. Believers are the source of the great joy that comes to the pastor-teacher when they reflect the attitude of Christ. Phil. 2:2ff

VI. Concerning church policy.

A. Regarding organization.

1. All things are to be done in an organized fashion. ICor. 14:40
2. Female pastors or deacons are not authorized. ITim. 3:1-2,12
3. Females are not allowed to teach or occupy any position of authority over men in the local church. ICor. 14:35-35; ITim. 2:12
4. The local church is to continue operating according to the sound doctrinal tradition that it received. ICor. 11:2; Col. 2:8; IThess. 2:15

B. Regarding widows/orphans. ITim.5

1. The local church is responsible to help those that lack resources. ITim. 5:3
2. Every man is responsible to take care of his own family first. ITim. 5:8
3. The local church is to refuse to provide ongoing support for younger widows. ITim.5:11-13
4. The local church is to provide assistance for those that meet all the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 5:9-10.

VII. Regarding the Royal family of Makarios Bible Church.

A. We are to pursue the correct mental attitude.

1. Lack of contempt. Rom. 14:3
2. No judging of other believers with respect to the non-essential areas in the Christian way of life. Rom. 14:1-10
3. We should seek not to offend in the non-essentials. Rom. 14:13
4. Lack of arrogance. Rom.12:16
5. As exemplified by Christ. Phil. 2:5
6. Towards those under separation. IThess. 3:15a
7. Love. IPet. 1:22; 2:17

8. Mercy. Jude 22-23
9. One viewpoint. IICor. 13:11
- B. The correct speech.
 1. Done with edification in view. ICor. 14:12,26; Eph. 4:29; IThess. 5:11
 2. Express verbal solidarity. Rom. 12:15
 3. Provide comfort. IThess. 4:18
 4. Encourage/exhort. IThess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13
 5. Towards those under separation. IIThess. 3:15b
- C. The correct actions.
 1. Willing reception. Rom. 14:1, 15:7
 2. Not flaunting your liberty at the expense of a weaker believer. Rom. 14:15,20, 15:2; ICor. 8:9; 10:32
 3. Associating with those “beneath you”. Rom. 12:16
 4. Hospitality. Rom. 12:13
 5. Providing financial and logistical aid when necessary. Rom. 12:13
 6. Living in peace. IICor.13:11; Heb.12:14
 7. Working to restore fallen believers. Gal. 6:1
 8. Bearing other believers’ burdens as appropriate. Gal. 6:2
 9. Acting in kindness. Eph. 4:32
 10. Forgiving when wronged. Eph. 4:32
 11. Sharing. Heb. 13:16
- D. Regarding the Royal family in other adjusted local churches.
 1. Provide appropriate greetings. Rom. 16:3-16
 2. Provide appropriate hospitality. ICor. 16:10-11; Heb.13:2
 3. Prayer. Col. 4:12-13
 4. Making appropriate financial applications when needed. Gal .6:10

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

- A. Concerning the establishment chain of command. Rom. 13:1,3,7; IPet. 2:13,17
- B. Concerning the Jews. Rom. 11:18
- C. Concerning the Gentiles. Rom. 12:17-21; Col. 4:5; IPet. 2:12
- D. Concerning the workplace. IIThess. 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; ITim. 6:1-2
- E. Concerning separation. IICor.6:14-17
 1. From false teachers, including all that rise up and espouse heretical doctrine, or cause division and dissension within the local church. Rom. 16:17; IITim. 3:5; IJn. 10
 2. From the cosmos. Rom. 12:2; IICor. 6:14-17; Eph. 5:7,11; IJn. 2:15
 3. From reversionistic believers. ICor. 5:7,13; IIThess. 3:14
 4. From defiling activities. IICor. 7:1
- F. We are to act as salt among the cosmos (a preservative that is tart, irritating, and soothing). Eph. 5:11
- G. We are to present the appropriate witness of the life. Matt. 5:16
- H. We are to show appropriate honor for all men. IPet. 2:17

- IX. Concerning marriage and family.
 - A. Husbands and wives.
 - 1. Husbands. Eph. 5:25,33; Col. 3:19
 - a. Spiritual and disciplinary responsibility over the children. Eph. 6:4
 - b. Spiritual responsibility to the wife. ICor. 14:35
 - 2. Wives. Col. 3:18; IPet. 3:1,3
 - 3. Both. ICor. 7:3,5
 - 4. The marriage vows. ICor. 7:10,39
 - 5. Separation. ICor. 7:11,12,13,15
 - B. Unmarried believers. ICor. 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 mental attitude 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 Bible doctrine. ICor. 15:58, 16:13; Phil. 4:1; IPet. 5:12
 - d. Alert. ICor. 16:13; Heb. 3:12; IPet. 5:8
 - e. Inner strength. ICor. 16:13
 - f. Love. ICor. 16:14; Heb. 13:1
 - g. +H. IICor. 13:11; Phi. 2:18; 4:4; IThess. 5:16; IPet. 4:13
 - h. Reflecting on pre-salvation state and the current blessings in Christ. 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; IPet. 5:5
 - m. Gentleness. Col. 3:12
 - n. Patience. IThess. 5:14
 - o. Thankfulness. Col. 3:15
 - p. We are to reflect on the person and work of Christ. IITim. 2:8; Heb. 3:1, 12:3
 - q. We are to receive Divine discipline when it comes, and avoid reacting to it inappropriately. Heb. 12:5,12-13
 - r. We are to reflect on the joys of the Christian way of life 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. Phil. 4:8
 - v. What to think. Phil. 4:8
 - 2. The inappropriate mental attitude qualities.
 - a. Arrogance. Rom. 11:20
 - b. Foolishness. Eph. 5:17
 - c. Surprise at suffering. IPet. 4:12; IJn.. 3:13
 - d. Being deceived by others or by your own self. ICor. 3:8, 6:9, 15:33; Gal. 6:3,7
 - 3. Things we are to know.
 - a. Concerning prophecy. IITim. 3:1; IIPet. 3:8; Jude 17
 - b. Concerning God's love. IJn. 3:1

- c. Concerning faith. Gal. 3:7
 - d. Concerning restoration. Jam. 5:20
- B. Verbal imperatives.
 - 1. The correct verbal activity.
 - a. Admonish: to urge with a warning. IThess. 5:14
 - b. Comfort. IThess. 5:14
 - 2. The incorrect verbal activity.
 - a. Lying to one another. Col. 3:9
 - b. Slander/maligning. Jam. 4:11
- C. On overt activity.
 - 1. We are to run our race, keeping SG₃ in view. ICor. 9:24; Heb. 12:1-3
 - 2. Men are to act like men: Possess and demonstrate positive qualities, courage, reliability, stability, consistency, dignity, and maturity. Opposite qualities include being childish, cowardly, effeminate, unstable, and irresponsible. ICor. 16:13
 - 3. All things are to be done in love. ICor. 16:14
 - 4. We are to examine ourselves regularly. IICor. 13:5; Gal. 6:4
 - 5. We are to receive comfort. IICor. 13:11
 - 6. We are to resolve conflicts daily, as far as it depends on us. Eph. 4:26; Rom. 12:18
 - 7. We are to model patience. Phil. 4:5
 - 8. We are to help those that need help. IThess. 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 angelic conflict 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. IPet. 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, recognizing that some people are articulating the views of Satan or the demons. IJn.. 4:1-2 cf. ITim. 4:1-3

XII. Concerning the sin nature.

- A. The Word of God 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 solicitations to evil. Rom. 13:14
 - 1. The STA is not to be placed in the position of rulership. Rom. 6:12; Eph. 4:22
 - 2. We are to deal with the STA based on positional truth. Rom. 6:11; Col. 3:5
 - 3. The STA, and its various lusts, is to be rejected by:
 - a. Removing them. Eph. 4:31
 - b. Putting them off. Col. 3:8
 - c. Running away. IITim. 2:22
 - d. Restraining ourselves. IPet. 3:10
 - e. Turning away. IPet. 3:11
- C. When we succumb to the STA, we must simply rebound and move on. James 4:8a
- D. We are to confess our sins to other believers, as is appropriate and necessary for the restoration process. James 5:16
- E. We are to be aware that practice of STA activities adversely affects our inheritance package. ICor. 5:1-5; Gal. 5:21

- F. STA activity is the basis for God's judgment; we are not to be deceived into thinking otherwise. Eph.5:6
- G. We are to recognize that STA activity is not limited to lascivious types of sins, but includes legalism, human good, and human viewpoint. Col. 2:18; I Tim. 3:1-3; II Tim. 3:5
- H. Specific STA activities we are commanded to avoid:
 1. Revenge tactics/cursing. Rom. 12:14,19-21
 2. Inappropriate debt. Rom. 13:8
 3. Being deceived by our own sin nature. I Cor. 3:18; Gal. 6:7
 4. Inappropriate boasting. I Cor. 3:21
 5. Inappropriate judging. I Cor. 4:5
 6. Sexual sins. I Cor. 6:18
 7. Complaining/gripping. I Cor. 10:10; Phil. 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; IPet. 4:15
 12. Inappropriate speech. Eph. 4:29
 13. Drunkenness. Eph. 5:18
 14. Worry. Phil. 4:6
 15. The anger complex. Col. 4:8; Jam. 1:19
 16. The love of money. I Tim. 6:11
 17. Activities that are characteristic of young people. II Tim. 2:22
 18. Failure to keep your word. Jam. 5:12
 19. Murder. IPet. 4:15
 20. Meddling. IPet. 4:15
 21. Inappropriate shame. IPet. 4:16
- I. We are to be aware that God is in no way connected with the sin nature and the temptations that come to us in the angelic conflict. Jam. 1:13,16

XIII. Conclusions.

- A. Although more could be said on the matter of Royal Imperatives, this doctrine should cover almost any situation in which a believer may find himself.
- B. One can see that **the commandment is exceedingly broad**. Psa.119:96
- C. However, His commandments are not burdensome to the believer that desires to do His will. I Jn.. 5:3; Matt. 11:28
- D. We may objectively evaluate ourselves, as well as other believers when necessary, based on these commands and the execution of them. II Cor. 13:5-6
- E. Some of the Royal imperatives carry promises that are associated with their application. Eph. 6:2-3; Phil. 4:4-7
- F. All carry the promise of SG₃ if they are executed in fellowship, with the right mental attitude, and for the right reason. Gal. 6:8
- G. Each believer must know and apply the commandments in order to effectively to remain in fellowship. I Jn. 3:24
- H. The believer that walks in fellowship will fulfill the righteous standards that God has set forth in His word. Rom. 8:4