

1. The Appointing (v. 15) – (נָתַן, *natan*) to give, to put *in place*, to set *in place*.
 - a) Just as God appointed Moses (Ex 3:10), Moses appointed (with the direction of the Holy Spirit) other leaders of the people (Num 11:16-17).
 - (1) The judges (Deut 1:15)
 - (2) The elders of Israel (Num 11:16-17)
 - (3) Joshua (Num 27:18-21; cf. Deut 31:3; 14; 34:9)
 - (a) Laying on of hands – an authoritative act
 - (i) In blessing of children (Matt 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-15) – as examples of kingdom citizens (cf. Jer 19:4 “innocents”)
 - (ii) In healing a blind man (Mark 8:23)
 - (iii) Additional healing (Luke 4:40)
 - (iv) Laying on of hands by Peter and John to bestow the baptism of the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans (Acts 8:17)
 - (v) Healing of Paul’s blindness and a special filling with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17-19)
 - (vi) Authority given by the council of elders by the laying on of hands (1 Tim 4:14)
 - (b) Yahweh is the head/leader (Acts 17:11; Eph 5:23; 1 Tim 3:2; Heb 13:7, 17)
 - b) Moses’ appointing of leaders is akin to appointing of elders in the New Testament (Titus 1:5).
 - (1) The Septuagint (LXX) Greek term for *natan* (נָתַן) (v. 15) is the verb *kathistemi* (kaqi,sthmi).
 - (2) Biblical uses of the term all have to do with authoritatively appointed authority with associated responsibility (in all 20 uses of the term – Matt 24:45, 47; 25:21, 23; Luke 12:14, 42, 44; Acts 6:3; 7:10, 27, 35; 17:15; Rom 5:19; Titus 1:5; Heb 5:1; 7:28; 8:3; James 3:6; 4:4; 2 Pet 1:8).
 - c) Ordination and the laying on of hands by the council of elders (presbute,rion, 1 Tim 4:14) are authoritative procedures of this appointment (2 Tim 2:2).
2. The Commands (vv. 16-18) – The rule of law
 - a) Judge righteously (v. 16a) – according to God’s standards (application: be Christlike) – These judges were judging a nation, not a church.
 - (1) As a church we are called to “judge” one another according to the standard of God’s Word – yet with grace and humility with a goal of repentance and reconciliation.
 - (a) The command of judgment: (Matt 18:15-18; 1 Cor 5:9-13) – For the testimony of Christ’s name and the purity of His church.

- (b) The standard for judgment: (Matt 7:15-21; Heb 4:12) – People’s actions (fruit) according to God’s Word.
 - (c) The manner of judgment: (Matt 7:1-5; Gal 6:1) – Honesty and humility (gentleness).
- (2) Remember the biblical spheres of God-given authority:
- (a) Civil government
 - (b) Church
 - (c) Home
- (3) I don’t believe in a “church court” for civil matters (a potential outcome of Christian Nationalism). I agree with Erwin Lutzer in his book, *Hitler’s Cross*, “In my opinion, the marriage of the church and state is always detrimental to the mission of the church. Either the church will change its message to accommodate the state’s political agenda, or the political rulers will use the church to their own ends. Regardless, the purity of the church is compromised.”¹ – **So, what is the church’s role in such matters?**
- (a) Exhort those involved in civil “partnerships” to be “equally yoked” (2 Cor 6:14-15) – most common examples are marriage and business partners.
 - (b) If both profess to be believers in Jesus Christ, exhort both parties to godliness and humility in their treatment of one another (1 John 4:20-21) and to resolve their issue in a God-honoring manner (1 Cor 6:1-8).
 - (i) As, believers, we aren’t to sue one another (believers) before a civil magistrate (“the unrighteous” 1 Cor 6:1).
 - (ii) Contention between brothers in Christ should be reconciled biblically with the help of wise biblical counsel rather than brother taking brother to court.
 - b) Treat people with impartial equality in your judgments (vv. 16b-17a) – Literally, “without regard to faces.” We should do the same in the church. (Deut 16:19; Prov 24:23; 28:21; James 2:1-4)
 - c) Fear God and not man (v. 17b) – How would that impact a judge’s decision? We are to “judge righteously” (v. 16)
 - d) It’s okay to get help for the hard cases (v. 17c) – Moses was, in a sense, the “Supreme Court” for Israel as he could bring it to God (the best kind of Supreme Court).
 - e) You’ve been told (v. 18)!

¹ Erwin Lutzer, *Hitler’s Cross: How the Cross Was Used to Promote the Nazi Agenda*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016), 22.