

The Relationship of Church and Government

Romans 13:1-7

“Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist are instituted by God.” - Romans 13:1

Main Point: Our relationship with Christ impacts our relationship with Governmental authority

Introduction: Use the following questions to introduce the topic of discussion -

In what area of life do you feel the strongest tension between living as a citizen of your country and living as a citizen of God's kingdom?

Have you ever been in a situation where you acted in disobedience to our government out of obligation to Christ? If so, describe what the situation was like.

How do you think Christians feel about politics generally? What are some errors Christians might make in their approach to politics?

Jesus never picked a political party, but He did choose to obey the politicians in authority during His day. As His followers, we should be known more for how we serve our culture than how we vote, and this identity is demonstrated first and foremost through love. When we treat those in authority over us with love and respect, the same attitudes naturally transcend into our relationships with our neighbors.

In Paul's letter to the Roman Christians he points out a Biblical view of their relationship and ours to the Government and ruling authorities.

1. Christians are to SUBMIT TO GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY. Have a volunteer read ROMANS 13:1-2.

Who in our society would be included in the phrase “governing authorities”? What is the command for how we are to respond to those authorities?

How do most people feel about submitting to anything? Why?

Describe a time recently when it was hard for you to believe God's sovereign rule over government, either in our country or another nation. What reasons does the text give for obeying and respecting authority?

Believers who recognize and respect the God-given role of government submit to it as a demonstration of their Christian devotion. What specific way did Paul tell us to submit in verse 7?

2. The Bible recognizes that THE GOVERNMENT IS MEANT TO SERVE THE PEOPLE. See ROMANS 13:3-5.

In what ways should the government support and serve the people of a nation? Is our government upholding its end of the deal?

What does Paul describe as the consequences of rebelling against government? According to v.5 what two motivations are there for obeying those in authority? Which should we be focused on as Christians?

Read ahead in **Romans 13:8-10**. What does this passage tell us is the best way to avoid the wrath of our government?

3. The Bible is clear that CHRISTIANS SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT. Read Romans 13:6-7.

In what ways does Paul say we should support the Government? Which of these is hardest for you and why? What should be our attitude about doing things like paying taxes?

What does it mean that those in authority are “God’s public servants?” Does knowing that affect your attitude toward those in positions of power and authority? How so?

When we think about showing respect and honor to the authorities in our lives, especially governmental, we often think primarily about our outward actions. How do your inward thoughts and attitudes measure up to Paul’s instructions in this passage?

Pray:

Pray for those in authority over you. Ask God to bless our Government and our nation and that He would show favor on Christians as we respect, honor, and support our leaders. Pray that God would be merciful and place Godly leaders in office who seek to serve Him and the people who elect them. Pray for an attitude of peace concerning those who hold office now, knowing God is ultimately in control.

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