

A Gospel Response to Government (Pt. 6)

Romans 13:1-7

- I. A Universal Command to Submit to Government (1a)
- II. The Reasons to Submit to Government (1b-6)
 - A. God established the principle and structures of all human authority (1b).
 - B. God has appointed all who currently occupy positions of authority in government (1c).

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- C. If you refuse to submit to a gov't official (without biblical grounds), you are opposing God's ordinance (2).
- D. God has assigned gov't the role of maintaining order by punishing wrong and praising good (3).
- E. God established government and appointed rulers for our good (4a).

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Romans 13:1-7

- F. If you refuse to submit (without biblical grounds), you will justly suffer God's wrath through gov't (4b).

Capital Punishment ?

(Gen. 6:11, 13; 9:5-6)

1. Only if the accused is justly tried and guilt established.
 - By due process (Num. 35; Dt. 17)
 - With sufficient evidence (Num. 35:30; Dt. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16; Heb. 10:28)
2. Only if the death penalty fits the crime (Gen. 9:5-6; Ex. 21:23; Num. 35:31-33)
3. Only if the death penalty is carried out under the jurisdiction of a duly appointed government authority (Dt. 19:15-21; Rom. 13:3-4)

A Just War?

The Biblical Arguments for a Just War

1. War is not inherently evil.
 - God wages war (Rev 12:7; Is. 42:13; Rev. 19:11).
 - God commanded OT Israel to go to war (Josh. 8:1; Num. 21:14; Num. 31:7).
2. War is part of the God-ordained role of gov't (Rom. 13:4).
3. War is a legitimate application of the law of self-defense (Ex. 22:2-3; Lk. 22:36, 38).

A Just War?

The Just Causes for a Just War

- Scripture condemns wars of aggression (Ps. 68:30; Amos 1; Hab. 2).
- Scripture allows war...
 - To obey God's explicit command (Num. 31:7) – solely with OT Israel but no longer possible.
 - To defend their own people (Dt. 28:1, 7; Judg. 6-7).
 - To defend other innocents (Gen. 14).

Christian Pacifism?

1. The commands pacifists cite (like turning the other cheek, loving your neighbor) are not given to nations but individuals and forbid revenge not self-defense.
2. The Hebrew word for murder (Ex. 20:13) occurs 49x in the OT but never for taking a life in war.
3. God blessed and empowered individuals who participated in just wars (Gen. 14:19-20; Ps. 18:30, 34; 144:1).
4. Soldiers who became followers of Christ were not told to leave their occupations (Lk. 3:14; Acts 10:1-2; Phil. 1:13).

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- F. If you refuse to submit (without biblical grounds), you will justly suffer God's wrath through gov't (4b).
- G. You should obey gov't because it's right and reflects God's great plan for humanity (5).
- H. The authorities are God's servants, devoted to fulfilling His purposes in society (6).