

Subject: *Biblical Truth about Government – Part 2*

Scripture: *Romans 13:1-7*

It is so important for us to understand God's purpose and plan for government. We also need to know and fulfill our responsibility in relation to government. That would include knowing what the Bible says about government, teaching our children and grandchildren to respect and obey government authority, and making sure our church understands and supports the role of government. God intended for government to be a blessing and for Christians in a nation to be a blessing to our leaders and public servants.

1. Every person should submit to government authority

- We must be more concerned about our responsibilities than our rights
- The Bill of Rights must never become more important than the Bible

2. God delegates His authority to government and its officials

- America is "One Nation Under God" (in fact, all nations are under God's authority)
- God is sovereign over all nations and governments
- He is sovereign over the physical location and time limitation of all nations
- He is sovereign over the rise and fall of nations

Deuteronomy 32:8 *When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.*

Acts 17:24-26 ²⁴ *God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; ²⁵ Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; ²⁶ And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.*

- He is sovereign over the position and tenure of government leaders
- He is sovereign over all kinds of nations (righteous and evil governments)

Daniel 4:34-35 ³⁴ *And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. ³⁵ And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*

3. God authorizes government to promote good and punish evil

- Law and order is a gift from God

***Ecclesiastes 8:11** Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*

- Vengeance belongs to God and He ordains government to carry it out in this life (God will enforce ultimate justice directly when He casts lost people into hell.)

***2 Thessalonians 1:7-9** ⁷ And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, ⁸ In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: ⁹ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

4. Government officials are God's ministers (servants)

In some countries the head of state is called the Prime Minister. The head of defense is called the Defense Minister. Rulers (vs. 3) are those who occupy a position of government authority on the federal, state, or local level. Our president is God's minister. Our senators and representatives are God's ministers. Our governor is God's minister. Our mayor is God's minister. Our judges are God's ministers. Our policemen are God's ministers.

The word translated minister (twice in vs. 4) is the same word from which we get the word deacon (Gk. *diakonos*, lit. "through the dust"). This word pictures someone who is following his master through the dusty streets and fields doing whatever the master needs him to do. It implies a sense of humility and obedience. The word translated minister in verse 6 is a different word (Gk. *leitourgos*), used to describe a public servant and also had a specialized meaning ("one who performed religious service), hence the word "liturgy."

5. Every person should respect and support government

In our country we have a democratic republic, but in Romans 13, they had a dictatorship and the man at the top was Emperor Nero. Slavery was widespread and personal freedoms were limited. We have some idea what it was to live in those days. Under Roman government, Herod ordered the slaughter of all baby boys under the age of two; John the Baptist was beheaded; Jesus was crucified and thousands of others who rebelled against the government; James was executed by the sword; and Paul was beheaded.

- We should pay government taxes (vs. 6, pay tribute).

***Matthew 22:17-21** ¹⁷ Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? ¹⁸ But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. ²⁰ And*

he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? ²¹ They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

- We should respect government officials (vs. 7, render to all their dues).

“Render” means to pay something that we owe. Literally, it means to “give back, repay.” It is not voluntary, but mandatory. God demands that we have respect for government officials. It doesn’t matter if we agree or disagree with their policies. It doesn’t matter if they have good or bad character.

Be thankful and respectful toward government officials. Don’t resent them or rebel against them. Believers are citizens of heaven, but we are also citizens on earth and we need to be good ones.

If we are to have this kind of submissive and respectful attitude for government officials on a human level, how much more should we submit and respect the God who has all power, all authority?