

“GOVERNMENT RELATIONS”
Romans 13:1-7 -- 11/01/2015
NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP
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The Church and its relationship to Human Government

Romans 13:1-7

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³**For rulers are NOT a terror to good works, but to evil.** Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? **Do what is good,** and you will have praise from the same. ⁴For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience’ sake. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

1 Peter 2:13-16

¹³Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for **the LORD’s sake**, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴or to governors, as to those who are sent by him **FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF EVILDOERS AND FOR THE PRAISE OF THOSE WHO DO GOOD.** ¹⁵For **THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD**, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men — ¹⁶as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, **BUT AS BONDSERVANTS OF GOD.** ¹⁷Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Acts 4:8-12

⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: ⁹**If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,** ¹⁰let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. ¹¹This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ ¹²Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Acts 4:18-20

¹⁸So they [the Jewish Leaders] called them and commanded them **NOT** to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John answered and said to them, **“WHETHER IT IS RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF GOD TO LISTEN TO YOU MORE THAN TO GOD, YOU JUDGE.** ²⁰**FOR WE CANNOT BUT SPEAK THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD.”**

Acts 5:26-29

²⁶Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned. ²⁷And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, ²⁸saying, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man’s blood on us!”

²⁹But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: **“We ought to obey God rather than men.”**

Hosea 8:4 [God says...]

They have installed [elected/chosen] kings [rulers/leaders], but not through Me. They have appointed [elected/chosen] leaders, but **WITHOUT** My approval. They make their silver and gold into idols for themselves for their own destruction.

[i.e. because of selfish & greedy motivations, they elect ...]

3 Institutions set up by God:

JURISDICTIONAL Distinctives, Roles, & Barriers

1. Marriage AND Family ...

Husband and Wife -- and their children (i.e. the “Nuclear Family”) ...

→ Genesis 1 & 2 - also → Deuteronomy 6:1-9 [→ “... teach your children ...”]

Focus: → Personal Relationships, Personal Responsibility, Nurture, Education, First understandings of Authority, Mutual Love and Care

Jurisdiction/Authority Level: That particular Family/Marriage/Children

does not have authority or controlling interest in other families/marriages/children

2. The Community of Faith in God ... God’s Word, Love, Mercy, Grace ...

Starting with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ... and continuing with

We also see the **Congregation of Israel** ... Tabernacle/Temple, Priests, Levites, etc.

Focus: → Worship of God, Obedience to God, Love of God as a **Community**, Together

It is an assemblage of singles and families, **together**, following God according to His Holy Word. Encouragement, Working together with Common Purposes, Goals, Callings, Mission, etc.

- Supports/Encourages/Teaches God’s Way of godly Marriage in Christ

- Supports/Encourages/Teaches God’s Way of Raising godly Children in Christ

- Supports/Encourages/Teaches God’s Way of how Civil Government should be and how **God-Followers** should relate to Civil (human) Government, etc.

Jurisdiction/Authority Level: That Particular Group, that Community

It Does Not Have Authority OVER Civil Government nor individuals or families, etc.

Example: the Pastor of a particular church has NO Authority over an individual family in the church he pastors. He cannot just come into their home, and start telling the husband to do things, or that husband’s wife or that husband’s children... that Pastor does not have that kind of authority.

That same Pastor, cannot just barge into a City Council Meeting and take over the chairmanship and dictate what’s going on, etc...

That Pastor, or set of Pastoral Elders, only has jurisdiction for that specific local church family (that group of individuals and families regarding their Community of Faith ... at that level of things in life)

→ Should be Exempt from Taxes: Ezra 7:24 - <http://biblehub.com/ezra/7-24.htm>

3. Government ... Introduced in Genesis 9:1-7 ... Organized Civil Governance ...

Example → 10 Commandments posted Publicly for 100’s of years in civil society

Focus: → Civil / Community Safety, Justice, Protection (all paid for by our taxes)

Protection: Protecting us from outside forces that wish to do us harm, and to protect us from our own neighbors (as applicable, as needed)

Justice: Appropriate punishment for the Crime (breaking Civil Laws)

This also includes **ECONOMIC Fairness:** Proverbs 11:1; 16:11

Just / Truthful / Fair Balances/Scales → in Business/Economics

Based on the Proverbs – Gov’t must protect “Fair Capitalism”

NOT Crony / Corrupt Capitalism

Jurisdictional/Authority Level: The Greater Community – Civil (not Religious areas)

Should NOT concern itself with the areas of life that “Marriage & Family” and that the Community of Faith have their Respective Jurisdictions in. **Yes, Christians can be in Government. Our “Declaration of Independence” AND the “U.S. Constitution” are fully and completely based on Judeo-Christian Principles** (e.g.: Exod. 18; Deut. 1; Ezra 7:24)

1. **Government is God's Concept ... yes, the God of the Bible ... The Judeo-Christian Heritage**

Of the pagan gods/goddesses ... (ancient gods/goddesses were chaotic, arbitrary, capricious ... humans in those contexts had to forge human governments that was not reflective of their gods that they worshipped or "feared")

Of Islam → Brutal – based on Islamic Texts of the Qur'an and Hadiths ... just look at history and now Islam borrows from the "Roman Catholic" morality of Muhammed's day ...

Of Atheism → No basis for any morality, sense of Justice, no basis for Government...

Many look to Genesis 9 as the basis for "universal human government" mandate from God, after the flood to Noah's 3 sons → Shem, Ham, and Japheth ... it is the root of God's Justice on Planet Earth."

Murder must be punished by Capital Punishment. ...

Genesis 9:5-6

⁵Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. ⁶"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.

Our First understanding of Government is as a child, growing up with our Parents as Dictators.

It was not a Democracy or a Representative Republic ... our Parents were the King and Queen and we, as children were their subjects. Although our parents would give their lives for their children, regarding "Government" we first experienced a Loving Dictatorship as our first taste of Government.

What Dad and Mom says, is what matters when we are growing up.

As we get older and the wear and tear of children wear on their parents, it can MORPH into a more Negotiable Dictatorship with some aspects of Allowed Democracy ... more and more the parents seeking Entrust and Trust their children with more and more responsibility with consequences, etc.

But, it is always a Benevolent Dictatorship, that may allow some aspects of Democracy, with Negotiations...

This is training for us to live in the real world of Work, Play, and Civil Government ...

We must Learn to Respect Genuine Authority ... but learn NOT to be a Door-Mat as well ...

We must learn our own personal Responsibilities, Integrity, and the Consequences ... fleeing from Narcissism and Embrace Adulthood ... that is the aim of Parents (hopefully)

And as Christian Parents, we seek to raise Holy Warriors for Christ, Biblically.

2. **Government exists**, originally & conceptually to Please God (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-16)

Government exists to Protect those governed from evil doers, Provide Fair/Balance Justice, and reward those how do good. This is God's Ideal Plan. For the most part, for our USA history, and those of many nations, on a day-to-day basis in the Western World (influenced by Christianity) the normal common folk tend to have a "nice" relationship with their Governments. This is God's Ideal. We know, though, as fallen humans (and that is what Human Governments are made of...) do not always fit God's Ideal.

What Paul and Peter lay out in their respective passages is fully God's Ideal what God wants for Government. That is what the USA Founders sought to reflect in their formation of the three branches of Government at the Federal, State, and Local levels ... a "Republican Representative" form of Constitutional Government of which is By, Of and For the People. With **Guaranteed** "natural" rights that derive their roots from God. The founders sought to put Constitutional Restraints on Government because of our sinful tendencies. They did not want to form any type of Democracy. That was a curse word on their lips. They saw the patterns of Jethro's Leadership Structure given to Moses, the Elders of Israel, and the Leading "Judge" (similar to our President) [such as Moses or Joshua] ... they also saw how the Levites, Priesthood, Religious leaders were separate and exempt from taxes, etc. These concepts went into the founding of our nation, the USA. Our Founding Documents reflect this (the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, and our USA Constitution)

3. **When Government becomes Corrupt**, it is the duty of its citizens to Resist and Please God rather than to please humans. Acts 4:8-20; 5:26-29 – and this too, was the Biblical reason behind the Revolution of 1776 ... If Government restricts you from Following God fully and openly, according to His Holy Word, the Bible, **we must resist, stand up and Obey God, rather than Man.**

Jeremiah 7:23: But this command I gave them: 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.'

4. **Our Responsibilities → Pray, Petition, Voice our Objection, and Vote Biblically (Hosea 8:4)**

¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14