

The Sacrificial Life Involves Submission to Government

Romans 13:1-7

Intro:

1. One of the ways you demonstrate the sacrificial life is in your relationship to government as responsible citizens.
2. You may ask, "How can I support a government that is so contrary to what I believe?"
 - a. Abortion on demand.
 - b. Spending that is putting us in debt to China.
 - c. The scare of eroding benefits & excessive taxes to pay for all of this.
3. Remember - as Paul was writing this letter, the emperor of Rome was Nero!
4. As a Christian, you have the responsibility to submit to your government because . . .

I. v1-2 - God Provided for You the Concept of Government

- A. **v1** - God designed the idea that everyone would be in subjection to someone.
 1. **I Pet 5:5** - Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
 2. **I Pet 2:17** - Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.
 3. **v2** - So when you say, "I am my own boss", "I'm going to do my own thing" or "nobody's going to tell me what to do" - you are rebelling against God's plan.
- B. God designed authority to be given to people - not to angels.
 1. **Gen 1:27-28** - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."
 2. **Tit 3:1-2** - Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.
 3. Jesus said to Pilate, **You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.**
- Jn 19:11.
 4. What this does not imply!
 - a. Certain individuals were designed by God to rule (the divine right of kings).
 - b. God didn't ordain Hitler, Saddam Hussein or Joe Biden.
 - b. Certain forms of government: democracy over against monarchy or dictatorship.
 5. What appears to be the implication? A few people would have the responsibility before God for many people.
 - a. The United States is not a pure democracy. We are too big & couldn't handle it.
 - b. We are a democratic republic: we elect representatives to legislate over us.
- C. **v2** - If you rebel against the concept of government, you will receive the judgment of God.

II. v3-4 - God Has a Purpose for Government

- A. **v3** - The First Purpose - to execute praise where praise is due.
1. **ILL: Dignitaries gather at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.**
 2. **ILL: Military personnel receiving commendation medals.**
 3. **ILL: Outstanding citizens receiving recognition from civic leaders.**
- B. **v4** - The Second Purpose - to execute wrath where wrath is due.
1. This verse implies the need for armed forces, police & correction institutions.
 2. **Bearing the sword** implies capital punishment!
 - a. But doesn't the Bible oppose capital punishment because of the 6th Commandment, **You shall not murder?** (**Ex 20:13**)
 - b. The 10 Commandments were addressed to individuals, not governments executing justice.
 - c. **Gen 9:6** prescribes capital punishment for **murder**.
 - d. **Ex 22:20** prescribes capital punishment for **idolatry**.
 - e. **Ex 35:2** prescribes capital punishment for **working on the Sabbath Day**.
 - f. **Lev 20:10** prescribes capital punishment for **adultery**.

III. v5-7 - God Commanded an Obligation to Government

- A. **v5** - God wants you to submit to government demands.
1. **I Pet 2:13-15 - Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.**
 2. Obedience is conditioned on the government's demands remaining consistent with God's revealed will.
ILL: Corrie Ten Boom hiding Jews in her bedroom.
 3. Obedience should not come from simply the fear of being caught - but to contentiously fulfill a Christian responsibility. **ILL: Obeying traffic laws.**
- B. **v6-7** - God wants you to support the government financially.
1. Lord Jesus supported the IRS when He said, **Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. - Matt 22:21.**
 2. **ILL: Jesus pays the Temple Tax even though He is, technically, exempt (Matt 17:24-27).**
 3. The Old Testament tithe supported the government as well as the religious institutions. It was commanded in the Law of Moses.

As Christians you need to obey the Laws of our country
when they are consistent with God's.
Pay your taxes - Support your government
Vote for godly people & godly laws!