

GOD, THE GOVERNMENT, AND ME

Grace: God's Power to Change Your Life-Week 35

Romans 13:1-7

I. THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENT

1. Civil government is part of God's purpose for the world.

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities for there is no authority except that which God has established." Consequently he who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves."

Romans 13:1-2

The 3 Institutions God Established:

- * **The family.** (Genesis 2:18-25)
- * **The church.** (Acts 2)
- * **The government.** (Rom. 13:1-7)

2. Government leaders are servants of God.

"For rulers hold no terror for those who do right but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from the fear of the one in authority? Do what's right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong then be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing, he is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." Romans 13:3-4

"Woe to those who make unjust laws and those who issue oppressive decrees to deprive the poor of their rights and rob My oppressed people of justice, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless. What will you do on the day of reckoning when disaster comes from afar? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your riches? Nothing will remain but to cringe among the captives or fall among the slain." Isaiah 10:1-3

3. Civil government is only temporary.

Daniel 10:44, 1 Cor. 15:24, Phil. 2:10-11

II. THE PURPOSES OF GOVERNMENT

1. To protect human rights.

"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed. For in the image of God, God has made man." Genesis 9:6

"You shall not murder." Exodus 20:13

2. To protect personal and property rights.

Exodus 20:14-17

3. To handle disputes between people.

"But how can I bear your problems and your burdens and your disputes all by myself? Choose some wise and understanding, respected men from each of your tribes and I'll set them over you."

Deuteronomy 1:12

4. To punish lawbreakers.

"He is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing." Romans 13:4

III. MY RELATIONSHIP AS A CHRISTIAN TO GOVERNMENT

1. I am a citizen of two worlds.

"But our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await a savior from there, the Lord Jesus." Philippians 3:20

"Consequently you are no longer foreigners and aliens but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household."

Ephesians 2:19

"And they came to Jesus and said, 'Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' He saw through their duplicity and said to them, 'Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He said to them, 'Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.'" Luke 20:22-25

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

Matthew 6:33

2. My primary obedience is to God.

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and they realized they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished. They took note that these men had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man that had been healed standing there with them there was nothing they could say. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. 'What are we going to do with these men?' they asked. 'Everybody in Jerusalem knows they've done an outstanding miracle. We can't deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people we must warn these men to speak no longer in this name.' Then they called them in again and they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, 'Judge for yourself whether it's right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen or heard.'" Acts 4:13-20

"Having brought the apostles they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name. And yet you filled all Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood.' Peter and the other apostles replied, 'we must obey God rather than men.'" Acts 5:27-29

3. I am to obey the law whenever possible.

"Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, and to be ready to do whatever is good." Titus 3:1

4 REASONS:

* God has established authority.

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities for there is no authority but that which God has established." Romans 13:1

* For my own good.

"For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended..."

For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." Romans 13:3-4

* To maintain a clear conscience.

"Therefore it is necessary to submit to authorities, not only because of the possible punishment but also as matter of conscience." Romans 13:5

* To maintain a good testimony.

"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, 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 people." 1 Peter 2:13-15

4. I am to pray for public officials.

"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." 1 Timothy 2:1-2

5. I am to pay taxes required by my government.

"This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor." Romans 13:6-7

6. I am to influence my government for good.

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:13-16