

THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY TO THE STATE

(Romans 13:1-7)

On Tuesday we will have the wonderful privilege of voting in the midterm election. It is indeed a very rare thing in human history for the general population to determine who their leaders would be. Never forget this. Don't take this for granted. Make sure you cast your ballot. We are so privileged to live in this land. Wow!

When Paul wrote Romans, he set forth in writing the longest Gospel tract in the Bible. (chapters 1-8) He followed his long doctrinal section with the practical outworking of the Gospel in our lives. (12:1-13:14) He tells of our relationship to God, other believers, people in general, and of our relationship to human government.

This text is the single best passage instructing us in our duties to the state.

TWO RESPONSIBILITIES LAID UPON US AS CHRISTIANS IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

I. We Are To Live In Submission To The Governing Authorities. (vv.1-5)

- A. Paul issues the command calling all of us to "submit to the governing authorities." (v.1)
 - 1. This means that we as Christians are to willingly place ourselves under all governing authorities and keep ourselves there. (as a way of life)
 - 2. There is only one limitation to this. If the civil government attempts to require disobedience to God's Word, then we must refuse to obey.
Daniel 3:16-18..."three men and a furnace..."
Daniel 6..."Daniel in the lions den..."
Acts 4:16-20; 5:28-29..."the apostles were commanded not to speak the Gospel."
(This is very rare. So our usual situation is to obey both God and man.)
 - 3. We need to practice civil obedience regardless of the failures of government. Many are immoral, unjust, and ungodly. Remember, Nero was Caesar when Paul wrote this.
- B. Paul provides a number of reasons why we need to practice submission to the state. (vv1b-5)
 - 1. The government (all authority for that matter) has been established by God. (v.1b)
 - a. This shows us again that God is sovereign. He is the great King.
 - b. God instituted government in eternity past. Genesis 9:6...human govt.
 - c. "Power" has only one source: God Himself.
 - 2. Resisting human government is to resist God. (v.2a)
God's plan in doing this was to restrict fallen men and women.
 - 3. Those who resist government will be punished. (v.2b)
Jesus stamped His approval upon the state in this. (Matt 26:52) "die by the sword."

