

# Romans 13:1-7

## The Christian and Government

Sunday Morning May 2, 2010 Pastor Stuart Fraser

- I. Introduction:** What exactly is the response of Christians supposed to be toward their government? Is there ever a time Christians should disobey the government? If so, when?
- A. Some Christians refuse to pay their taxes because some monies are used for immoral activities: abortions, military purposes, pro-homosexual programs, etc.
1. Jesus never told the Roman centurion to leave the army (**Mt 8:5-13**) or Zaccheus to stop collecting taxes (**Lk 19:1-10**), or Cornelius to resign his post (**Acts 10**).
  2. Jesus was born into a culture where political corruption and tyranny was common.
  3. Herod killed all the children in Bethlehem (**Matt 2:16**), taxes were exorbitant and Rome looked the other way when tax collectors used coercion and extortion tactics.
  4. Jesus said, “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's” (**Matt 22:15-22**). This was the extent of Jesus’ “political” talk.
- II. The Christian and Government (vv. 1-7)**
- A. The **Responsibility** of Christians to Government (**v. 1a**)
1. “Subjection” (*hupotasso*) – military term used for soldiers ranked under officers
  2. **1 Peter 2:13-17** – Peter said to submit yourself to “every human institution...”
    - **Titus 3:1-2** – “Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.”
- B. The **Reasons** for Submission to Government (**vv. 1b-5**)
1. Governmental Rule is **Divinely** Established (**v. 1b**)
    - **Ps 62:11** – All “power belongs to God.”
    - **Acts 17:26** – “He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.”
    - **John 19:11** – “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.”
    - When it says God ordains powers, it doesn’t mean He approves of that power.
  2. Governmental Resistance is **Rebellion** (**v. 2a**)
    - **1 Sam 24, 26** – David refused to kill Saul, when Saul was trying to kill him.
  3. Governmental Rebellion is **Punishable** (**v. 2b**)
    - “That policy is in stark contrast to what is found in many societies today, where often more pity is expressed for criminals than for their victims” (MacArthur, *Romans 9-16*, p. 222)
  4. Governmental Punishment is **Just** (**v. 3a**)
    - **Eccl 8:11** – “Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.”

5. Governmental Justice Promotes **Good** (vv. 3a-4a)
6. Governmental Good includes **Capital Punishment** (v. 4b-5)
  - **Gen 9:6** – “Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, *for in the image of God He made man.*” (**Deut 17:6-7, Matt 26:52**)
  - **Acts 25:10** – “If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die...”
  - God told Israel to destroy the Canaanites off the face of the earth (**Deut 20:16-17**) and He told king Saul to completely obliterate Amalek (**1 Sam 15:1-3**).
- C. The **Response** of Christians to Government (vv. 6-7)
  1. Show your **Financial** Support for Government (v. 6)
    - Many taxes are levied justly by the government, but not spent justly.
    - “Servants” (*leitourgos*) – is not word *doulos* (slave), but is used in NT for a ministers of God (angels, Paul, Christ).
    - Civil servants whether they know it or not serve God’s eternal purposes: protecting lives and property, providing jobs, stability, health, education, clean water, foreign aid, fighting crime & fires, emergency services, etc.
  2. Show your **Moral** Support for Government (v. 7)
    - Honor (*Time*) – high esteem that is genuine, not hypocritical or pretend.

**III. Conclusion:** What are some principles we can take with us today from Romans 13:1-7?

- A. It is the duty of Christians to be as **possible** to the government as one can without violating the laws of God.
- B. The government does have the God-ordained right to bear the sword, and not only the right but a **responsibility** to bear it to preserve, maintain, defend, and promote life.
- C. It is the duty of Christians to pay their taxes to the those governing powers, **regardless** of the ethical or moral standards of its leaders who spend those funds.