***Christians' Relationship to Government
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Today, we begin a new series in Romans 13:1-7. Our subject is "The Christian and the State," and this is segment number one.

In Romans 12, the apostle Paul has described to us godly conduct basically in relationship to other Christians. When we come to Romans 13, Paul moves out from that Christian community to describe proper Christian conduct within society in general, and particularly with respect in relationship to the governments under which we live. Paul, by the Holy Spirit, gives instruction which is based on the fact that everyone in the world, believer and unbeliever alike, has a sin nature, while he lives in a community of people in a world which is under the domination and control of Satan. It is very important that we understand that that is reality.

This was a very great thing when the writers of the American Constitution gathered together. While many of them were indeed born-again believers, they all came from a biblical frame of reference of understanding. They knew the nature of man. They understood that man was evil. They understood that this world was a place dominated by satanic influences. So, they realized that if people were going to live together, and not destroy one another, and have freedom without chaos, it was necessary to form a government that placed restraints in a proper degree upon the sin nature without, at the same time, becoming a tyrannical domination that excluded all personal freedom. They learned that from the Bible.

**Christians' Relationship to Government**

We come to a very valuable section of the Word of God here, because it deals with what is the relationship of we who are born-again, enlightened Christians to a system of governmental rulers (politicians) who themselves are very often diametrically opposed to what the Word of God teaches, and who rule in a way that is tyrannical, or who govern in a way that threatens our personal freedoms. What should a Christian's attitude be? This is the real world.

**We Live in Satan's World**

We live in a world dominated by Satan, who wants to encourage sinning. So, Paul has given us a very valuable piece of information here. This divine mission of government is executed mainly among citizens who are slaves of the old sin nature, and who themselves are destined to spend eternity in the lake of fire. God himself has instituted human government on this earth. He gave us the divine institution of human government in order to preserve the human race from destruction. He gave us the guidelines for being able to live in the devil's world. The mission of government from God, of all things, is generally in the hands of people who themselves are dominated by the sin nature; who are not born-again people; and, who themselves, though they are the rulers, are headed for the lake of fire. So, you have a tough combination here for a Christian to fit into that kind of a society.

**The Roman Empire**

Nowhere, of course, was that truer than at the very beginning when the Christians came on the scene in the Roman Empire – an empire dominated by paganism. It was religious, indeed, and devoted to false gods. And it was very arrogant in its confidence that it had understanding and viewpoints that were real. Therefore, it had the right to exercise great authority over people. Yet these rulers were all headed for the lake of fire. Here were these simple, enlightened Christians who knew what life was all about. These were the only people who were really in touch with reality. They were the people who knew the score. How were they indeed to relate themselves now to people like Nero, and to the corruption that surrounded the administration of Roman government so often?

These unbelievers; were in charge of government on this earth; they rejected the guidance of the Bible; and, they are basically in rebellion against the Creator God. So, mankind, in every nation on the face of the earth now, is living under the domination of Satan, and under rulers who are dominated by Satan.

Ephesians 2:2, for example, makes this clear to us – that this is the case in the world today, when Paul points out: "In which times (past) you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the earth (referring to Satan), the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience." Paul is observing here that we Christians at one time were just like unbelievers. We were under the domination of the one who rules this world. He is called the prince of the power of the air here – namely Satan.

2 Corinthians 4:4 reinforces that: "In the God of this age (referring to Satan) has blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them. Satan is going about constantly, not only spreading his darkness, but seeing to it that he keeps people unenlightened, and darkens their mind, particularly toward the gospel, until God the Holy Spirit overrides that darkness.

1 John 5:19 says, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness (or more precisely, 'in the wicked one')."

So, human societies, as we know them, on the earth today, and through the centuries, walk in spiritual darkness, out of touch with all reality in terms of the world that God has made, and how it must function, now that Satan dominates that world. In John 8:12, we read, "Then spoke Jesus again unto them saying, 'I am the light of the world. He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." This is a clear statement that the societies of this world are in spiritual darkness unless they are enlightened by Jesus Christ. Any nation on the face of this earth which does not recognize Jesus Christ as the God-man; the light of the world; and, the source of all spiritual knowledge and perspective, is a nation which is benighted.

Now those nations are not without religion. Those societies are not without their plans of securing some eternal happiness after death. They all have their plans of salvation. But as the picture on our evangelism brochure portrays, the mob is going into the lake of fire, because they are not enlightened by the only source from which enlightenment about spiritual things can come, and that's from the Bible. And from the Bible, we find that light comes from the instruction of Jesus Christ.

So, once mankind has followed Satan into total chaos, everybody's finally going to get the picture straight. Right now, God is permitting humanity to follow its self-confident, sophisticated stupidity to its own self-destruction. People are trying to create their own millennium. Unregenerate politicians are trying to create a millennium here on earth.

Finally, when all of this has shredded itself, Jesus Christ is going to return from heaven. He will then set up a world government, and He will then create worldwide happiness. Psalm 110:1 promises to the Son, Jesus Christ, that all the world will one day become His footstool. It'll all be under His authority.

Now you know that the Jews don't believe that. You know that the Muslims don't believe that. You know that the Buddhists don't believe that. You know that the liberal pagans don't believe that. So, the masses of humanity are completely out of touch with where history is moving. History is moving to the place where Jesus Christ is going to be the ruler of this world, and all nations will be under his authority.

Today, God limits the power of human viewpoint governments to the extent that He preserves opportunity to proclaim the gospel, and to build the body of Christ, the church. There is a limitation. This is Satan's say. This is the day of the unregenerate man. And men are being free to use their intellect and their sophisticated, supposed knowledge and insight and perception in order to create good life; fairness; justice; and, all those good words here on this earth. God is letting them have a field day, short of stopping the proclamation of the Word of God.

**God is out There**

Christianity is based upon the premise, obviously, of the existence of the Creator God, and of the fact that He has revealed himself to mankind. If you don't believe there's a Creator God out there who made all of us and all of this, and if you don't believe that He has communicated to us, then that's the end of the discussion, and we have got nothing to talk about. That is a presupposition which is rational; intelligent; reasonable; and, indeed established by many evidences. There is a God out there. He is the omnipotent Creator, and He has communicated to us.

**God is the Source of Truth**

God, in this communication, has demonstrated that He is the source of truth. He is the source of information which He does not alter to fit the opinions of mankind. Sometimes this is described as true truth. This is not subject to adaptation over a period of time. We, therefore, call this absolute truth. The absolute truth that mankind needs for time and eternity has been clearly revealed by God, and has been clearly recorded without error in the Bible. That's why we can speak with confidence, and we can speak with authority. We are not, of all men, as Paul says, just hopelessly and helplessly trying to muddle our way through with the best that we can conclude as to what God would think, and what would please Him, and what we should do in our relationship to Him. We know what we talk about. That knowledge and that attitude is not very common in American society today.

A few decades ago, that was indeed the case. Up to the end of World War II, we were a nation indeed who knew and who understood that there is a God out there Who understood that He had communicated to us. And we understood that we knew certain things that were true (really true – absolutely true), and things that were absolutely false. I remind you that it was that generation that produced the millions of young men and women who formed the military forces of World War II that conquered two the most despotic and powerful nations and empires of evil that the world has ever seen – in the Japanese Empire, and in the German empire.

There is little doubt that that generation of Americans, those young men and young women, were the finest that this country has ever produced – never before; and, certainly never since. There was always a lot of nonsense during the sixties when we had the college and student rebellion, and people moving into the drug culture, talking about how these were the finest; most educated; and, most intelligent young people that the world had ever seen. Those knuckleheads couldn't park their bicycle straight if it was necessary for them to do so. And certainly they could not have carried, and we doubt today how many would be able to carry, what was put upon the shoulders of that young generation in World War II, and what they had to carry, and what they had to pull off, and what they had to face, and what they had to carry through on the battlefields of this world. They did it (in large measure) because they still knew that there really was a God out there. There were rights and wrongs. And we knew what was true, and what was not true, in terms of absolute truth.

So, we Christians come from that frame of reference. We hold that we need that kind of information, and we have to have it in some source that we can trust – not because some pope upon the throne proclaims something to us, and not because some preacher or priest tells us something, but a higher authority that is unquestioned, and that has to be the Bible itself. And for that Bible to carry that authority, it must, of course, proven its truthfulness. It must be without error.

**The Inerrancy of Scripture**

Now when a person who has been trained in the knowledge of Scripture chooses, then, as our society has chosen to turn away from God's divine viewpoints that we so widely once possessed a human viewpoint – the first thing the person does when he wants to turn away from God's viewpoint is that he challenges the inerrancy of Scripture. That always happens. You have to get rid of the Bible as an authority if you're going to go flying out here on your own, free of all these restrictions that the Word of God places upon a human being who is shot-through with the disease of the sin nature.

We have come in our society today where that is the case – cutting ourselves off from the anchor point of the Word of God. There is now no foundational basis for a society to function in freedom without chaos.

So, we have rejected the absolute truths of God, and we are seeking instead for spiritual truth by the consensus of the majority of the sinners that we associate with. The doctrines of the Scriptures are now adjusted to the whims of our culture. Reinterpreting the biblical gospel so that all qualify for eternal life in heaven is considered compassionate, rational, enlightened, and progressive.

**Bible Doctrine**

Once a person has severed himself from the absolute truth of the Bible, he is ready to accept the relativism and the evils of his culture. Christians, on the other hand, who are totally untaught in Bible doctrine, are really uncertain about what to believe. Therefore, they cannot contend boldly with society, with its confident human viewpoint secularism. Bible doctrine, however, is not mere human speculation. It is the very mind of God. Doctrine is the only basis, then, for building a social order in a nation. That's the frame of reference from which the apostle Paul speaks to us here in Romans 13, when he gives us some explanation of how we Christians are to relate ourselves to a government, and to rulers who have abandoned indeed the very Word of God.

**Know and Apply Biblical Truths**

The first step that is necessary, from a biblical point of view, for a person to be a good citizen, is to know and apply classical, biblical truths. The only way to be a responsible person in both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of man is to know the principles of doctrine. God, who is faithful to Scripture, produces Christians who are faithful to His word, and those are the patriots in the finest sense of the word. Men and women whose graves are marked all over the world, and Americans who died to preserve freedom, were, by and large, Americans from a generation that had this respect for the Bible; had this respect for God; and, had this respect for His authority and for moral right, how ever they may have personally failed in their own practice.

**The True Christian Patriot**

The Christian, who is a true patriot, is motivated by his love for God and his loyalty to the divine institution of human government. He is not motivated merely by some chauvinistic attitude (his country, right or wrong, best of all), or by some blind devotion to a political leader. He is motivated by the fact that he loves God, and by the fact that he knows that God has created the divine institution of government. Immediately, government is put into a position of great importance; of great authority; and, of great respect. Christians who are this kind of patriot can influence society to do good things for people in their own nation.

**A Value-Free Society**

A value-free society may sound very liberal, very enlightened, and free, but it only creates a social jungle. And that's what we have come to today. We don't have the Bible, so we have a value-free society. You get together, and you make up your own set of values. What does that produce? We've got crime; juvenile delinquency; illegitimate pregnancies; drug abuse; prostitution; homosexuality; disease; violence; and, deceit. And that's what man produces when he makes his own value system. That is because man's system produces a self-centeredness for you to do your own thing, and to gratify your own desires at anyone's expense.

Government cannot govern a people who have no moral restraint. And when that happens, the government has no recourse but to increase its authority, and its power, and its domination over the lives of the people. If you have no moral restraint, then the government has to become a tyrant in order to keep some sense of stability, and some sense of order. In such a society, then, there can be no protection for the minority; there can be no protection for the unborn child; there can be no protection for the aged person; there can be no protection for the defective, handicapped, and weak; and, there can be no justice. The natural man cannot, by reason, come up with a value system that will restrain the sin nature. That can only come from God.

So, when you have a nation which has no basis for values, then you have a society that you just can't control. Then everything becomes a jungle, and everything becomes back to what it was before the Noahic flood – nothing but violence and evil. In a nation which is based on man-made values, the political structure will operate on the premise that people must be changed from their undesirable characteristics by government programs. In the real world, God tells us that people must be changed through regeneration in order for us to be able to change society.

So, Romans 13:1, with that background, begins by saying, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." Some people are very uncomfortable when they read that phrase. The word "soul" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It is the word "suke." Here the word means "every person." It is used like this often in the Bible. Acts 3:23 is one such example. And the term "every soul" indicates every single human being. So, suddenly we not only are talking to you who are Christians, but we've gone beyond the Christian community to lay down a basic, absolute truth principle for every human being. What is that?

**Every Soul is Subject**

Every soul is to be subject to something. The word "subject" is illuminating. It's the word "hupotasso." "Hupotasso" in the Greek language is a military term. It means "to line up under an authority." It connotes subjection to a higher authority. This is in the present tense, which indicates that this is the constant duty of the Christian – to line himself up under some higher authority. It is middle voice in the grammar, which tells us that you are to do this to yourself. Middle is reflected back upon what you do to yourself. But it is also imperative mood. It's a divine command. We would translate this: "Let every person be in subjection."

**Something Higher**

Be in subjection to what? To what he calls "something higher. The word "higher" is actually the Greek verb "huperecho." "Huperecho" means "to be superior." Here it is used like an adjective. It means governing. And it's referring to some higher authority. 1 Peter 2:13 uses this same word in the sense of governing when it refers to the king. Peter says, "The king is the superior authority here." Here it is the governing powers. The word "powers" looks like this. It's the Greek word "exousia." The word "exousia" in the Greek language means authority.

**Governing Authorities**

So, with Paul is referring to here is a governmental authority within a segment of human society. It indicates the right of some in that society to rule over other citizens in that society. We would translate this then as: "The governing authorities." Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities.

What the apostle Paul is doing here is directing all people, and Christians in particular, to be in subjection and obedience to the legally constituted government under which you live in your society. This instruction was perhaps particularly necessary to the Roman Christians, because many of them were Jews in their background. We find from the Word of God that the Jews were not fond of supporting Rome with taxes. We note this in Luke 20:21-22, where we have recorded the Pharisees coming and proposing to Jesus the question as to whether they ought to be paying taxes to Caesar. They were not fond of doing that.

The Jews also took great pride in their independence. John 8:33 indicates their statement to Jesus that they were not under anybody's authority ever, and yet they were at that very moment under the authority of the Roman government. Furthermore, the Jews were always bucking Roman governmental authority with various seditious movements. Some of those are described in Acts 5:36-37, where some leader would arise who had some magnetism. And he would draw a following, and they would try to create a rebellion against the Roman government.

On one occasion, the Jews created such a disturbance in Rome that the Emperor Claudius ordered them simply to leave. We have this observed in Acts 18:2, referring to Priscilla and Aquila, who themselves, were caught up in that order to leave – that eviction. They had been in Rome. They were there when Claudius evicted all the Jews to stop the trouble that the Jews were making because they tended to be rebellious and seditious.

So, perhaps the apostle Paul, in writing to these Roman Christians that had so many Jews among them, wanted to stress something that they needed to get straight regarding their attitude toward the government. Since Christianity was associated with Judaism in the eyes of the Roman authorities, Christianity also became suspect because of the way the Jews acted.

**Do not Threaten the Government**

It's necessary for Christians to avoid threatening the government. That was the point the Paul was trying to make. Christians are not to be insubordinate to civil authorities. Christians are to respect God's divine institution of human government. How the government acts in exercising its authority, or the character of the ruler, does not exempt us from obedience. That's where people go astray. This statement is making it very clear that the government can be tyrannical, and you are in subjection and respect to it. You are in the suffering, but you do not act in rebellion. Revolution is basically forbidden in the Word of God.

The ruler may a disoriented, vile creature that just crawled out from a bunch of rocks – the lowest slime ball type imaginable. But that does not exclude your loyalty and your respect and obedience to his governmental authority while he bears and holds that office. Paul does not deal with the issue of an evil ruler or of a tyrannical government. We have to face that. We kind of wish he did. We kind of wish he'd say, "Now, if the guy is a bum, here's how you act;" or, "if this government is tyrannical, this is what you should do." He just doesn't tell us that. He is simply laying down a basic principle. The only reason government is here is because God put it here. He did this right after the flood. He established the authority of human government for maintaining freedom without chaos within a society in Satan's world.

So, the Christian is not to be a revolutionary. Anarchy is not God's plan for mankind: "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities."

**There is no Governmental Authority except from God**

Then Paul says, "For," and he uses the word "gar," which is a conjunction indicating the reason. For he says, "There is no power," and he uses the word for "ou" for "no," which is the strong negative. There's absolutely no power. This is interesting. He says "exousia" again. This means authority. Here, in this context, he's talking about governmental authority. There is no governmental authority except from God ("theos"): "For there is no authority except from God."

So, here's another important piece of absolute truth information. The Bible makes it clear that all civil authority in a society is placed there by God. In communist countries? You bet. In someplace like Cambodia, where almost half of the population was murdered when the communists took over in order to implement their Marxist Leninist principles? The Khmer Rouge communists came in, and they just brutally turned the society upside down. So, half the people of that pleasant land (that fair place – Cambodia) were slaughtered. Yes, God put that government in there. Wherever the government is, enlightened or benighted, we have to come from the principles of Scripture: "There is no government ever in existence at any level, from top to bottom, except by divine appointment.

Now that gives us a whole different perspective on what we're dealing with. Not only is human government a divine institution, but the very form that that government may take at any point in time, or at any particular place, is the result of an act of God, including those who are in positions of authority in that government. All who govern do so under the divine institution of government. So, they must seek to rule in accordance with biblical principles. This is one way of following the principle of overcoming evil with good.

**Politicians**

If you are a politician, and you are in a position of governmental authority, you should be very clear about the fact that you have not been put in there by the consent of the governed. That is on the human level. But you should be aware that God was up there operating the voting machines. He is moving hands and brains and eyes to punch the little buttons the right way, and to pull the levers the right way, so that the person to whom God said, "You're going to win" is the person that won. And the person to whom God says, "You're going to lose" is the person that lost. Now we have the picture that you are in a position of authority, and if you have any brains at all, you will understand that you are now a minister of God.

I was the chaplain during July at the Irving City Council. That meant that I had to open the council sessions with prayer. On one of those occasions, in the prayer, I was asking God to help these who are in these positions of governmental authority to realize that they are the ministers of God, and that they have come here to execute the will of God in justice and righteousness; and, thereby, to preserve freedom without chaos, and to be faithful to their duty, above the human level, to the God who has placed them in authority. That was the picture that we have to understand.

**Capital Punishment**

So, now suddenly you become president of the United States. Having said that, as I look out at this audience, I think immediately, God forbid. But perhaps some of you become president of the United States. How are you going to rule? Somebody says, "I'd like to be president of the United States. And I want you to vote for me." OK. Do you understand that God established human government, and that if He puts you in power, you have to run the thing the way He wants you to run it? And for you to know how He wants you to run things, you have to know the Bible. How much do you know about the Bible? You may say, "Oh, it's a bestseller. I know that. It's a nice book. It's a good book. There are a lot of nice things in it." Well, do you believe in capital punishment? "No, I don't believe in that. That's cruel and unusual. That's brutal. I don't believe in capital punishment."

However, human government was established on the basis of the magistrate having the authority for murder one to take a person's life. After the flood, this was the basis of all human government. God gave man the supreme authority over other human beings, which is to take that person's life by properly constituted legal means that establish that they have violated a supreme moral law of God in willfully taking another life. And all other lesser punishments come from that, in order to keep society with law and order; justice; fairness; and, everybody with equal opportunity to exercise your unequal abilities.

You're telling me that you want to be president of the United States, and you are against capital punishment. Do you realize that you're asking to be part of the divine institution of government, and you don't want to act according to the principles of the person (the living God) Who created this divine institution, and Who calls the plays? You really shouldn't be running for president if you don't believe in capital punishment, because you cannot fulfill the divine institution of government.

**Abortion**

You say, "I'd like to be president of the United States." Well, do you believe in preserving the life of unborn children? "No, no, I don't believe in that protoplasm stuff there. I believe that a woman should have a right to her body and she should be able to kill anything that she creates." But the Word of God, in a place like Psalm 139, makes it clear that every conception is an act of God with a plan of a human being destined for the purposes of God, from that moment. To take the life of an unborn child is murder. A person who is in governmental authority is responsible for maintaining the moral code of God against murder. How can you say you want to be president of the United States, and you are in favor of permitting abortion? You cannot fulfill the divine institution of government that you are asking us to make you a part of.

So, suddenly we've got some interesting perspectives here as we look out upon American society today. And you can multiply what I'm saying in many, many directions. We have very clear stipulations from the Word of God. We can have a politician who stands up, and he proposes a program that violates that principle of the Word of God. Most Americans are so ignorant of Scripture that they do not understand the principle of the authority of government under God to fulfill God's purposes in society, that they blindly elect the most ridiculous clowns to public office who are direct violators of everything that God stands for. All who govern do so under the principle of the divine institution of government. They have to rule according to biblical principles, or they have no right to be in that position. The state is to be the guardian of freedom and justice, to fulfill its divine mission. For it to be the guardian of freedom and justice, it must operate on biblical principles, or it cannot fulfill that mission.

So, the Christian is to be subject to the powers of government because it exists by the very will of God. That's what Paul means. There is no governing authority but of God.

Furthermore, the end of verse 13 says, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Here he is indicating that the very rulers that do exist (and that's what he means here – those which exist – those governing authorities which exist) are ordained. They actually are in existence. The word "ordained" looks like this. It's the Greek word "tasso." It means "to be established." These who are in governing authority have been established there by God Himself. This word "tasso" is perfect tense, which means that, at some point, the will of God appointed these people to governing authority, and now they have continued to the present in that position. Furthermore, it is passive, which is interesting because it stresses what Paul is saying here, when he talks about governing authorities (politicians who have won elections, or tyrants who have assumed power, they did not do that simply on their own. They did it because God gave them the nod. This is passive voice. They did not place themselves in authority. God has placed them in that authority.

So, those who come to political power at any level, by any means, do so by the decision of God. The one who governs thus governs by the sovereign choice of God, and not merely by the consent of the governed. This is what Jesus told Pilate when Pilate was telling Jesus how much power he had as the governor, and what he could do to Jesus if he chose to do it, if Jesus did not act right. Then Jesus, at that point of his own agony, interestingly enough, interjected a very important, illuminating principle concerning rulers – politicians who are in authority. John 19:10-11 is Jesus' response to Pilate: "Then said Pilate unto Him (to Jesus), "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have power to crucify You, and have power to release you?" Pilate was saying, "I am the government authority. I can kill you, or I could let you live. Now I want you to answer my questions."

Jesus does respond in verse 11: "Jesus answered, 'You would have no power (no authority, at all) against Me, except it were given you from above (from God). Therefore, he that delivered Me unto you has the greater sin.'" Jesus said, "Yes, these people, the rulers of Israel, have taken Me, and they have put Me into your hands, and they called for My death (for My murder). And they have a great deal of responsibility. But you don't have any control over Me except the control that God has given you."

Now if Pilate was really a thinking man, he would have broken out in a cold chill. But he's like most politicians are today. He didn't think, "Hey, if that God is really there, and I am his agent, and I'm going to pay if I do not execute this mission according to His will, I better be careful what I do with this Man." Other signals in his own judgment warn him that he better be careful what he does with this Man. But he didn't make the connection to say this: "This God has placed me in authority. He will hold me accountable for what I do. I better act according to His principles." Unfortunately, Pilate did not know what those principles were.

For this reason, we Christians are to respect constituted governmental authority, and we obey it. It is a creation of God. Rulers themselves are placed in authority by God to do good for the citizens – good that is judged by biblical principles, not the human viewpoint good that is so destructive to our society today. Failure to rule by Scripture merits removal from office. And when a politician gets too far out of line, beyond the purposes of God, then God takes him out. He simply moves him out of the position of authority, and everything collapses around him. All the power structure; all the bureaucrats; and, all the people who are in positions of influence – they come down with him, and God just breaks the balloon. Rulers have a divine commission to maintain order; to encourage well-doing; and, to punish evil doers.

**Poor Rulers**

Now it is true that all the rulers that nations have are not always good rulers. That's because God gives a nation the kind of governmental leadership it deserves. When evil men are elected to power, or when they seize it by force, it is designed by God so that God is fulfilling His purposes. This is pointed out to us in Daniel 4:17, where we read about dealing with Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Daniel says, "This matter is the decree of the watchers and the demand of the Word of the Holy One, to the intent that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will, and set it up over it the basest of men." Here Daniel was given this very principle that Paul is talking about. Paul knew this from Daniel. Daniel says, "God rules over all nations. So, you clowns who think you're running things should understand. God rules all nations. He sets up who's going to be king; who's going to be chief of police; who's going to be chief of the garbage detail; who's going to be fire chief; and, who's going to be the dog catcher. Everybody – God sets it up. And over some nations, He puts the lowest scum balls imaginable. He puts the basest of men." I mean, that is referring to a fellow human being.

Why would God do that? It's because this is what the people of that nation deserve. And that's the point I was trying to make earlier – that when you come from enlightenment of the Word of God, and then you start thumbing their nose at it, you can expect your life to go downhill. You can expect it to come apart. You cannot revert from enlightenment except to darkness. And when a nation, such as ours, with our biblical heritage, starts thumbing its nose at that heritage, the only place you can go is from light back to darkness, which is exactly where we have gone. And the consequence of that is that we have been treated with the basis of rulers. Democracies and dictatorships are all under divine control. And God uses one nation to execute His discipline on other nations. Governments which are detached from subjection to Scripture are the governments which produce wars; famines; disease; depressions; excessive taxation; welfare dependency; and, the destruction of life, liberty and happiness.

**Abortion**

Does it not cause you to have great concern (to have a little chill run up your spine) to realize that the United States has slaughtered more unborn children than live in all of Australia? 5,000 beautiful babies a day go down the tube. Don't kid yourself. A nation that has cut itself off from the Word of God is a nation that is going to get political leaders who will want to go for the highest office of the land, and be against capital punishment, and be in favor of abortion. They do not understand the divine institution of government and the responsibility of executing that authority as the agent and minister of God. They don't care whether He is out there; they're not sure whether He's out there; and, they certainly don't know what He thinks. Arrogant rulers who ignore God and Scripture are going to be brought down, and they're going to learn the hard way. And we have seen that so often in our time. The arrogant ruler, riding the crest of power and authority, is brought down.

**Nebuchadnezzar**

Nebuchadnezzar, in Daniel's Day, learned it the hard way (Daniel 4:34-35). This Nebuchadnezzar, who did not understand that he was in power because God had placed him there, exercised such arrogant authority. He was sure that there was no one greater than he was, and nobody could bring him down. He was not a man who was executing the divine institution of government as the agent of the living God. So, he found himself, for seven years, living like an animal in the field. His hair was scraggly and long; his fingernails were long; and, he was eating grass like an animal. And seven years later, after he cuts off the bird claw-like fingers, gets cleaned up, and starts looking like a human being again. Nebuchadnezzar makes this dramatic pronouncement in Daniel 4:34-35: "And at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me. And I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored Him who lives forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion. And his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. And He does according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. And none can stay his hand, or say unto him, 'What are you doing?'" Talk about learning the hard way.

And we in American society today, by an act of God (we think it's by an act of our ballot), are sending a string of clowns who exercise governmental authority in complete violation of the Word of God. That is because we, as a people, lack divine viewpoint discernment, so we have self-imposed misery in every aspect of our national life. We Christians, however, have God's point of view, so that we are the hope of American society. We are the preserving salt. We are the illuminating light.

Jesus pointed this out in Matthew 5:13-14, when He said, "You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its savor, with what shall it be salted? It is therefore good for nothing but to be cast out, and be trodden under foot of men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." America was once indeed the city set on a hill, but its light has been dimmed because God is now giving us the kind of political rulers we as a people who have abandoned His word, deserve. Historically, that always happens. God's laws must be the basis for man's laws for a society to prosper and to survive in the devil's world. A society which is detached from God's laws is a society which will oppose capital punishment; permit abortion; tax away the fruits of one's labors; tolerate sexual immorality and perversions; and, they will refuse to defend freedom. The majority decisions of the voters of a society cannot be right if those voters are not governed by divine viewpoint.

So, Paul is introducing us to some very dramatic information that most Americans are totally oblivious of. Romans 13:1: "Let every human being be in total subjection to political authorities." There is no political authority, and there is no governmental authority, except from God. The very authorities who govern are people who are established in that place of power by God himself. You will get, as a people, what you deserve.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)