

The Role of Government – 10/11/20

TEXT- Rom 13:1-7 *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*

INTRO – What is the role of government and what should be the relationship of Christians to our leaders?

I. What is the Role of Christians Toward Government Leaders?

- **Pray for them**

1 Ti 2:1-3 *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;*

- **Submit to them**

1 Peter 2:13 *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

- **Obey them**

Heb 13:17 *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

- **Respect them**

We should not mock or denigrate them. We should respect the office. Even those with whom we disagree.

- **Pay our taxes**

Mat 22:20-21 *And he saith unto them, **Whose is this image and superscription?** 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, **Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.***

- **Maintain a higher standard than them**

Php 2:15-16 *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, **in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation**, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

II. What is the Purpose of Government?

- **Their authority comes from God**

They are placed there by God – Rom. 13:1 . . . *For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*

- **Their authority is not greater than God**

Acts 5:27-29 *And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.***

- **The essential role is to exercise justice.**

Lev 19:15 *Ye shall **do no unrighteousness in judgment**: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.*

Negatively, government is to punish evil. Romans 13:3-5

Psa 82:2-4 ***How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?** Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.*

Positively, it is to promote good. Romans 13:6-7

1 Pe 2:14 . . . ***for the praise of them that do well.***

The role of government in punishing evil stems from the fact that we live in a fallen world. We are all sinners with good and bad desires. If allowed to act on these desires unchecked there would be chaos and discord in society. Governments are established in order to secure the peace so that those wishing to live peaceably with their neighbours may do so.

Man was created in the image of God

Gen 1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

In intellectual and moral likeness

Eph 4:23-24 *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created **in righteousness and true holiness.***

Col 3:10 *And have put on the new man, which is renewed **in knowledge after the image of him that created him:***

Col 1:9 *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with **the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;***

Jas 3:9-10 *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are **made after the similitude of God.** 10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

Civil authorities are instruments of God's wrath on wrongdoers and for the good of the society, have the responsibility of retribution. "The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent

for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong” The state will never be the remedy of sin, but it must be a restrainer of evil by punishing it. *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Vs. 3 Psa 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.*

Only a man who is born again can be restored to God’s image and rule himself.

- **They are there for our protection**

1 Pe 2:13-14 *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

Jeremiah instructed the exiles in Babylon to “work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare” (Jeremiah 29:7). Paul commanded Timothy and all believers to pray for rulers so we might live “peaceful and quiet lives” 1 Timothy 2:2.

The state must encourage law and order, never disorder or lawlessness. Although God has ordained government and its purposes it does not have the solutions for all the problems and troubles in society. Those who govern are fallible people just like us needing God’s wisdom just as much as we do.

1 Pe 2:14 . . . *for the praise of them that do well.*

Note that this passage does not call the government to play a positive role by creating rights, goods, or services, but to give praise to those who actively do good.

This praise could be giving special recognition to those who are serving in exemplary ways or just acknowledgment, official or otherwise, for being a good citizen. John Murray writes that, praise could be expressed by saying that good behavior secures good standing in the state.

This passage does not prohibit government from providing goods and services, but strongly puts the emphasis on upholding the rule of law and encouraging good behavior.

“Socialism only works in two places: Heaven where they don't need it and hell where they already have it.” -- Ronald Reagan

- **Giving to Caesar What Is Caesar’s**

Jesus said his “kingdom is not of this world.” He also acknowledged Caesar’s place in this world, commanding his followers to “give to Caesar what is Caesar’s,” while still recognizing God as the ultimate authority of the universe

This was the very first statement of limited government in the history of the world...Give Caesar the money because it’s his money—he printed it—but don’t give him the allegiance...

Mat 22:20-21 *And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*

When standing before Pilate, Jesus acknowledged Pilate’s authority over him, but said, **John 19:11** *Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.*

Why America is great

1. Our Constitution

It's been called by many around the world as the greatest piece of literature to ever be written. Not so much because of all that's in it, although that helps – but mainly because of what's NOT in it. It is assumed that our rights are God-given, not government given – an assumption that seems cutting edge in our all too PC world. Offering a balanced view of the government's role and the individuals responsibility to practice self-control, it is one our finest achievements, and what keeps us unique and a leader in the free world.

2. Our Land

This is where we get literal. Real literal. America, not her people, not her government, but the land of America is truly a sight to behold. Where else can you see the grandeur of the Grand Canyon, and the brilliance of the changing of the leaves on an Appalachian Mountainside? Rivers, deserts, tropics, and the Midwest plains come together to create enough sites for a lifetime. Even in the plains of West Texas, a land that is not known for being particularly easy on the eyes has its very own unique charm and attractive spots. In America, you are always a short drive away from seeing something that will truly take your breath away.

3. Our People

America is made up of her people, and when it comes to people, we're clearly the cream of the crop. Although the news outlets would have us all believe that we're every color hates the other, and is looking for ways to hurt one another – most of us simply haven't ever experienced such nonsense. Most Americans are eager to help their neighbor, and are excellent ambassadors for this land of the free. We are passionate about our patriotism, and even though many of us differ in ideology, we want America to be the best version of herself possible. We're not only looking for the easy way for us, but we want America to be the vibrant, charming beauty that we know her to be. That's what sets us apart, and that's what would be good to remember when we happen to differ in our ideological, spiritual, and political views.

4. Our Opportunities

We are the land of opportunity. That fact is why people have flocked to our shores from the very beginning. If you want to succeed here, you can. It might be hard, and require a healthy amount of blood, sweat, and sob sessions – but it's possible. Just like in poker, sometimes others get a better hand than you, but that doesn't mean they will beat you in the hand. There is always a way to get ahead here in America. We effectively ooze opportunity. Many of come here without so much as two nickels to rub together and have ended up making a very comfortable life for themselves. Not all of us are

going to be in the 1 percent of the world's wealth. But, we can grab the opportunity right in front of us with both hands and do some good in the world.

5. Our Freedom

Some of you may love America just as much as I do, others might be more prone to object to everything that others adore about her. But that's just what makes this land so amazing. It is a place where we can (and should) peacefully and respectfully disagree. We are free to think what we want about life in general. Everything America stands for is freedom of thought and avoidance of oppression. That is the American dream, isn't it? To be free to do what we want, and not have a government that keeps us from expressing our beliefs as we see fit.

The beauty of this land is that as long as we aren't hurting one another, and aren't asking for anyone else's money – we are free to do what we want to do. The closer we keep to that ideal, the more American we are. We should not oppress one another, not with our legislation, and not even with our behavior on social media. America, although ever bold and aggressive, is also gracious. To do any less is to be "Un-American". To judge and condemn one another based on labels and boxes that others place us in flies in the fact of what Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin had in mind when they signed the Declaration of Independence. Perhaps it's time for all of us to remember that America, as glorious and beautiful as she is – is nothing without the ideals that made her unique and glorious in the first place.

CONCL –

Alexis-Charles-Henri Clérel de Tocqueville (29 July 1805 – 16 April 1859) was a French political thinker and historian, that dates back to 1886: "I went at your bidding, and passed along their thoroughfares of trade. I ascended their mountains and went down their valleys. I visited their manufactories, their commercial markets, and emporiums of trade. I entered their judicial courts and legislative halls. But I sought everywhere in vain for the secret of their success, until I entered the church. It was there, as I listened to the soul-equalizing and soul-elevating principles of the Gospel of Christ, as they fell from Sabbath to Sabbath upon the masses of the people, that I learned why America was great and free, and why France was a slave."