

# CHRISTIANS, GOVERNMENT, & ROMANS 13

## ROMANS 13, LESSON #1 (8-8-10)

### INTRODUCTION

Absolutely nothing presented will have anything to do with politics, political parties, or any particular person currently in office.

Nothing presented will try to sway you to vote, not vote, vote for any particular person or thing.

Nothing presented either excuses or condones revolution of any kind.

I am hopeful that this presentation will:

Help you understand the biblical view of the relationship between a Christian and government, That it will receive a fair unbiased hearing with an open mind, and That it will receive a thorough hearing to the end.

When God led the Israelites out of Egypt, they were under a theocracy in which God Himself was their King. He gave them the Mosaic Law to function under but over time, they became restless and wanted a human king to rule them like other nations. He warned them that they wouldn't like a human king ruling over them because he would eventually abuse and take advantage of them. They didn't heed His warning and continued demanding a king, so Saul became the first king over Israel, **1 Sam. 8:5-22**.

Throughout the ages, people have struggled with kings, dictators, and anyone who had power over them. Some were fair and a few were benevolent, but most of them used the reigns of power for their own benefit and eventually became overbearing tyrants. The well-being of the people depended on who the ruler was.

In the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, something changed. Leaders in the thirteen colonies in America separated from England because they recognized that rights come from God, not from a king, parliament, or government. Furthermore, they declared these rights to be unalienable which means they cannot be transferred or abridged. American leaders explained this novel idea along with the reasons they were cutting all ties with England in the Declaration of Independence which they signed and sent to King George III.

A bloody war ensued and no one thought the colonies had even a remote chance of winning. It lasted eight years and when the British troops finally left New York harbor on November 23, 1783, the united States of America were free.

On July 4, 1794, eight years after the Colonists won their independence from England, Dr. David Ramsay gave an oration describing the state of the union. He was a field surgeon during the war and a noted historian after the war. He was the Senate leader at the time he gave this oration. Excerpts from that speech are given below.

*"In the United States, the blessings of society are enjoyed with the least possible relinquishment of personal liberty. We have hit the happy medium between despotism and anarchy. Every citizen is perfectly free of the will of every other citizen while all are equally subject to the laws. Among us no one can exercise any authority by virtue of birth. All start equal in the race of life. No man is born a legislator. We are not bound by any laws but those to which we have consented. We are not called upon to pay our money to support the idleness and extravagance of court favorites. No burdens are imposed on us but such as the public good requires. No enormous salaries are received by the few at the expense of the many. No taxes are levied but such as are laid equally on the legislator and private citizen.*

*“No man can be deprived of his life, liberty, or property but by operation of laws freely, fairly, and by common consent previously enacted.*

*“The liberty of the press is enjoyed in these States in a manner that is unknown in other countries. Each citizen thinks what he pleases and speaks and writes what he thinks.*

*“So great is the responsibility of men in high stations among us that it is the fashion to rule well. We read of the rapacity [corruption], cruelty, and oppression of men in power but our rulers seem for the most part to be exempt from these vices. Such are the effects of governments formed on equal principles, that men in authority cannot easily forget that they are the servants of the community over which they preside. Our rulers, taken from the people (and at stated periods returning to them) have the strongest incitement to make the public will their guide and the public good their end.*

*“It is one of the peculiar privileges we enjoy in consequence of independence that no individual—no party interest—no foreign influence—can plunge us into war.*

*“Think of the cruel war now carrying on by kings and nobles against the equal rights of man—call to mind the slaughtered thousands whose blood is daily shedding on the plains of Europe—and let your daily tribute of thanks ascend to the Common Parent of the Universe Who has established you in a separate government exempt from participating in these horrid scenes....*

*“Upon an average, five of our citizens do not pay as much to the support of government as one European subject. The whole sum expended in administering the public affairs of the United States is not equal to the fourth part of what is annually spent in supporting one crowned head in Europe.*

*“In these States there is a vigorous execution of the laws and an upright administration of justice. Property and personal rights are well secured. Criminals are easily brought to suffer the punishments due to their demerits...*

*“Time would fail to enumerate all the superior advantages our citizens enjoy under that free government to which independence gave birth. I may safely affirm in general, that as it proceeded from the people, it has been administered for their benefit.*

*“Do Englishmen value themselves on what is called Magna Charta? In the preamble to this celebrated instrument, it is stated that “the king, of his mere free will, gave and granted to all freemen of his realm, the liberties” which are therein specified. What is thus said to be given and granted by the free will of the sovereign [the King], we the people of America hold in our own right. The sovereignty rests in ourselves; and instead of receiving the privileges of free citizens as a boon [favor] from the hands of our rulers, we defined their powers by a constitution of our own framing which prescribed to them that thus far they might go but no farther. All power not thus expressly delegated [to the government] is retained [by the people themselves]....*

*“With pleasure I could dwell on the pleasing prospect of our rising greatness, ... We ought, in the first place, to be grateful to the all-wise Disposer of Events Who has given us so great a portion of political happiness. To possess such a country with the blessings of liberty and peace together with that security of person and property which results from a well-ordered, efficient government is—or ought to be—[a] matter of constant thankfulness.*

*“Ignorance is the enemy of liberty—the nurse of despotism.... Had I a voice that could be heard from New Hampshire to Georgia, it should be exerted in urging the necessity of disseminating virtue and knowledge among our citizens. On this subject, the policy of the eastern States is well worthy of imitation.*

*“The wise people of that extremity of the Union never form a new township without making arrangements that secure to its inhabitants the instruction of youth and the public preaching of the Gospel. Hence their children are early taught to know their rights and to respect themselves.*

*“We should be fired [motivated] with the generous ambition of teaching mankind by our example that the people are capable of governing themselves to better purpose than it ever has been done by kings and privileged orders.*

*“While war with its horrid attendants is the pastime of kings, let it be the study of republicans to make unceasing advances in everything that can improve, refine, or embellish society. Animated with this noble ambition, the superior happiness of our country will amply repay us for the blood and treasure which independence has cost. May that ambition fire our breasts, and may that happiness increase and know no end, till time shall be no more.*

*David Barton, Celebrate Liberty! Famous Patriotic Speeches & Sermons (Aledo, TX: WallBuildersPress, 2003), 29.*

Things have certainly changed but not for the better.

What can people do when they are oppressed by their own government?

Does God give us the right to resist, or must we be subjugated to tyranny with no recourse?

Opinions vary but God has addressed the issue in the following scriptures.

### **ROMANS 13:1-7**

- 1) Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**
- 2) Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.**
- 3) For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same;**
- 4) For it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.**
- 5) Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience ' sake.**
- 6) For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.**
- 7) Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.**

### **THE CONTROVERSY**

It is amazing how one person can read these verses and get one thing while someone else can read them and get something altogether different. It is hard to overstate the importance of correctly understanding this portion of the Word of God. Differing opinions over what these seven verses say have split up friends, families, and nations.

There are basically three viewpoints concerning the scope of civil authority:

#### **VIEWPOINT #1**

Some believe God has given **unlimited authority** to those who govern over us, and we are to submit to them without question. We are to obey every law regardless how odious, oppressive, or immoral it may be.

Supporters of this viewpoint are known to say such things as, “**My country, right or wrong**”, meaning they will submit to and support their country whether it is good or evil. Or they may say, “**You must obey no matter what, it’s the law,**” or “**He may be wrong, but he’s still the president**”.

#### VIEWPOINT #2

Others believe **God limits the authority** of those who govern over us when, and **only when, they interfere with our religious beliefs and/or traditions**. They would resist in matters of faith but not in matters of freedom.

#### VIEWPOINT #3

Still others believe God limited authority to those who govern over us, and we are to submit to them as long as they do not step outside the confined boundaries God has set over them in matters of faith and freedom. They believe we are to **submit to legitimate authority but not to tyranny**. We will address each of these briefly before we look at each passage in detail:

### VIEWPOINT 1

This **unlimited authority** viewpoint is the least rational out of the three. Most people who hold this notion would agree that authority is limited in every other area of life.

Parental authority is limited. Parents are not allowed to abuse their children.

A husband’s authority is limited. He is not allowed to abuse his wife.

A pastor’s authority is limited. He cannot tell a member of their church where to work, what to buy, who to marry, etc.

A boss’s authority is limited. He cannot interfere with his employee’s private lives.

A teacher’s authority is limited. He cannot interfere with his student’s private lives.

Why would only governmental authority be unlimited? Some might answer, “**Because Romans 13 says that governmental authority comes from God and we are commanded to submit to it.**” But the same thing could be said about parental authority. God gives parents authority over their children and commands children to obey their parents, **Eph. 6:1**, but He limits parental authority in **Eph. 6:4**. God also gives husbands authority over their wives and commands them to submit to their husbands, **Eph. 5:22-24**, **1 Peter 3:1**, and **Colossians 3:18**, but the husband’s authority is limited in **1 Peter 3:7**, and **Colossians 3:19**. Christians are commanded to obey their pastors, **Heb. 13:17**, but their authority is limited in **1 Peter 5:2-3**.

Some see government as a benevolent benefactor providing for the needs of the people to which the people, therefore, are obliged to submit. However George Washington had a clearer view of government. He said,

*“Government is not reason; it is not eloquence; it is force! Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master.”*

Lord Acton’s famous axiom says, *“Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”*

The statistics on governments killing their own people over the past hundred years would certainly confirm the wisdom of these famous quotes.

#### Genocide Statistics over the last century

- Armenia: 1,000,000 killed from 1915-1923
- China under Mao: 58,000,000 killed
- USSR under Stalin: 20,000,000 killed (Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror*)
- Holocaust: 5,700,000 killed from 1933-1945 (Nuremberg Trial)
- Khmer Rouge (Cambodia): 1,600,000 killed between 1975-1978

- Bosnia: 250,000 killed from 1992-1995 (U.S. State Dept.)
  - Rwanda: 1,000,000 killed in 1994
  - Somalia: 300,000 killed from 1991-present (IRIN, a UN agency)
  - Darfur: at least 450,000 killed from 2003 to present (*UN High Commission on Refugees*)
- Total: approximately 89 million people  
<http://www.urbanministry.org/wiki/genocide-statistics>

Does it sound reasonable that God would give some men unlimited authority over other men? If one has unlimited authority, he is answerable to no one, not even to God. God is the Sovereign ultimate authority of the universe. Does this mean His authority is unlimited and He can do anything? The answer is “No” because there is a difference between having ultimate authority and having unlimited authority. His authority is limited by the attributes of His own perfect character. His Sovereignty must harmonize with His Love, Righteousness, Justice, Veracity, Immutability, Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, and Eternality.

God’s authority does not give Him the right to lie because of His perfect attribute of Veracity. It does not give Him the right to do something wrong because of His perfect + Righteousness. It doesn’t give him the right be unjust because of His perfect attribute of Justice. So, if even God doesn’t have unlimited authority, does it make sense that He would give unlimited authority to man who has an inherent sinful nature?

Frederic Bastiat (1801-1850) wrote about the consequences that befall a people when the power of government is unlimited.

*“It is impossible to introduce into society a greater change and a greater evil than this: the conversion of the law into an instrument of plunder. In the first place, it erases from everyone’s conscience the distinction between justice and injustice. No society can exist unless the laws are respected to a certain degree. The safest way to make laws respected is to make them respectable. When law and morality contradict each other, the citizen has the cruel alternative of either losing his moral sense or losing his respect for the law. These two evils are of equal consequence, and it would be difficult for a person to choose between them.”* Frederic Bastiat, *The Law*, 1998 *The Foundation for Economic Education*, p. 8

Governing authorities who think there is no higher authority than their own are fascists.

*“This is fascism, it is not only cruel, it has no objection to lies or contradictions. Whatever appears necessary. Since it assumes there is no law higher than the government’s law, fascism requires total obedience to the state. It is nationalistic, hyper-patriotic, the ultimate in ‘My country right or wrong.’ Militaristic, it glorifies soldiers who are willing to go anywhere and fight anyone.”*

*“Fascism says that government should do whatever appears necessary to serve its own interests.”* *Ancient Rome, How It Affects You Today*, Richard J. Maybury, 2004, *Bluestocking Press*, pp 47-48, 53

*“Fascism assumes it has the right to intervene anywhere and control anything. [example] In 1994 Germany’s Minister of Agriculture drafted a law requiring dog owners to spend two hours of “quality time” daily with their dogs.”* *Ibid* p. 54

*“Who is sovereign, and to whom is man responsible? This source of sovereignty is also the source of freedom. If sovereignty resides in God and is only held ministerially by men, then the basic responsibility of ruler and ruled is to God, who is also the source of freedom. But if sovereignty resides in the state, whether a monarchy or democracy, a man has no appeal beyond the law of the state, and no source of ethics apart from it.”*  
*This Independent Republic*, Rousas John Rushdoony, Ross House Books, 1964, p. 14

Would God give unlimited power to men to rule over us and then condemn us for resisting them when they abuse us? Does that sound like what a just and righteous God would do?

Some people are willing to submit to government no matter how abusive or tyrannical it becomes, not because they think God has given it unlimited power, but because they either benefit from the governmental abuse or they lack the courage and resolve to resist it.

Samuel Adams had this to say to these type of people:

*"If ye love wealth greater than liberty, the tranquility of servitude greater than the animating contest for freedom, go home and leave us in peace. We seek not your council, nor your arms. Crouch down and lick the hand that feeds you; and may posterity forget that ye were our country men."*

Those who will submit to every law because they believe government's authority is unlimited will eventually become slaves of the state. They will lose their freedom, their honor, their money, their property, their privacy, and their self-esteem.

## VIEWPOINT 2

This viewpoint rightly recognizes that God has given only limited authority to government. It acknowledges that there are times when one may refuse to submit to governing authorities in matters concerning faith. This could be referred to as "**biblical civil disobedience**". Is biblical civil disobedience limited only to matters of faith or does it also include matters of conscience regarding freedom and justice? Some believe that governmental authority is superior to the authority of individual conscience.

*"But no citizen, even the Christian, has the right to set himself up as legislature or as supreme court to decide which laws he will obey and which he will not obey whenever his worship of God or his proclamation of the gospel are not directly involved. When the individual's conscience has authority over law, then government by law is jeopardized." Princeton theologian Charles Hodge made this comment and then went on to say, "We are to obey all that is in actual authority over us, whether their authority be legitimate or usurped, whether they are just or unjust."*

*Dallas Theological Seminary. (1976; 2002). Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 133 (133:344).*

Some may agree with Mr. Hodge, but doesn't it sound like he is promoting blind allegiance by advocating obedience to authority whether it is legitimate or not? He has conceded that the authority of one's conscience supercedes the authority of the State in matters of worship and evangelism, so why not in other areas? How can we please God if we act against our own conscience? And how can we be true to our conscience if we are required to obey every law, even unjust laws?

**Rom. 14:23 . . . Whatever is not of faith [conviction] is sin.**

Martin Luther, in his famed "Here I Stand" speech in 1521 before the emperor at the Diet of Worms:

*"Since then Your Majesty and your lordships desire a simple reply, I will answer without horns and without teeth. Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen."*

*Conservative Theological Journal Volume 2. 1998 (4) (54). Fort Worth, TX: Tyndale Theological Seminary.*

Mr. Hodge said, “*When the individual’s conscience has authority over law, then government by law is jeopardized.*” Well I say that a government that is jeopardized by its people being true to their conscience is a government that needs to be changed or replaced. That government is not worthy of the people’s allegiance or submission.

If Mr. Hodge is correct, the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights should not be honored. For both recognize that every individual has God-given rights in which no one, not even the State, is free to ignore. The Bill of Rights is a partial list of our God-given rights which forbids any encroachment by the State. However, according to Mr. Hodge, we are wrong to demand that those rights be respected. We must adopt the philosophy that the people are the servants and the government is the master, even though this is the opposite of what our founding fathers believed. Are we not allowed to resist tyranny as did the colonial Christians who fought to free themselves from the tyranny of Great Britain? In fact, according to Mr. Hodges statement, the colonies had no right to resist the evil oppression and coercion of King George III and were wrong, or even sinful, to use force to defend their God-given rights.

*“Is the right of trial by a jury of one’s peers, the Magna Carta’s great legacy to English common law, an invalid principle because it was coercively extracted from an unwilling monarch?”*

The colonists used every peaceful means available to them to be treated fairly, but when every effort failed, they simply refused to obey the unjust laws any longer. Some call this **civil disobedience**. Not all civil disobedience is legitimate or justified before God, however there are several examples of civil disobedience in the Bible where God blessed, rather than punished, those who refused to submit to tyranny. The following are a few examples:

**Exodus 1:15-20**, the Hebrew mid-wives refused to obey the command of the King of Egypt to kill the male Hebrew babies and God blessed them for it.

**Exodus 1:17 . . . *But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had commanded them, but let the boys live.***

**Exodus 1:20 *So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty.***

**Joshua 2:1-18**, the king of Jericho command Rahab to turn over the Hebrew men to him who were spying out the land and who had visited her house. She disobeyed and hid them so they would not be captured and God spared her life and her family because of what she did.

**Esther 5**, Esther ignored the law that forbid anyone to see the king without his permission, and God spared her life and the lives of all the Jews because she was convicted by her conscience to disobey the king.

**Daniel 3:1-30**, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego disobeyed the order of King Nebuchadnezzar to bow down to his golden image. The king threw them in a furnace, but God delivered them through the furnace unharmed.

**Daniel 6**, Daniel refused to obey the command to pray to the king and was thrown into the lion’s den. He came out unharmed while his accusers and their families wound up being dinner for the lions.

**Matt. 2:1-12**, King Herod told the Magi to find Jesus and report back to him, but God told them in a dream not to report back to Herod. They obeyed God rather than the king, and God protected them from the angry king.

**Matt. 2:13**, Joseph and Mary did not stick around and allow Jesus to be killed when King Herod ordered the death of 2 year old male babies. God instructed them to flee to Egypt and protected them on their journey.

Peter and his companions refused to obey the leaders who commanded to stop preaching the gospel.

**Acts 5:29 . . . *But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men."***

Did Moses violate God's principle of submission to authority when he killed the Egyptian taskmaster in defense of his fellow Hebrew?

Did Elijah violate God's principle of submission to authority when he openly challenged Ahab and Jezebel?

Did David violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to surrender to Saul's troops?

Did John the Baptist violate God's principle of submission to authority when he publicly scolded King Herod for his infidelity?

Did Paul violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to obey those authorities who demanded he abandon his missionary work? In fact, Paul spent almost as much time in jail as he did out of jail.

Virtually every apostle of Christ, except John, who survived being boiled in oil, according to historians, experienced martyrdom from hostile civil authorities. In addition, Christians throughout church history were imprisoned, tortured, or killed by civil authorities of all stripes for refusing to submit to their various laws and prohibitions. Did all of these Christian martyrs violate God's principle of submission to authority?

*"So, even the great prophets, apostles, and writers of the Bible (including the writer of Romans Chapter 13) understood that human authority--including civil authority--is limited. Romans 13 Revisited, by Chuck Baldwin, Feb.27, 2009, New With A View.Com*

Biblical civil disobedience and revolution are not the same thing. **Biblical civil disobedience** is resistance which is defensive, whereas **revolution** is aggression which is offensive in nature. God does not advocate nor condone revolution against authority.

The "Revolutionary War" and the "Civil War" are not examples of revolution but of legitimate resistance to tyranny. The "Revolutionary War" is a misnomer and would be better referred to as "**The War for Independence**". The Colonists did not attack England nor did they try to overthrow it. They simply could no longer tolerate the oppression of King George, so they declared their independence.

He did not respect their right to be free, so they had every right to defend themselves when they were attacked by his soldiers.

The "Civil War" also known as the "War Between the States" are also a misnomers. The Southern States did not try to overthrow the U.S. government nor did it attack the North, so it should not be classified as a "Civil War". The Southern States seceded from the Union, which they had the right to do, and formed a nation called the Confederate States of America. So it wasn't a War between the States of the Union because the Southern States were no longer part of that Union. They had formed a separate Union called the Confederacy. When the South could no longer tolerate the oppression of the North, they separated from it and were forced to defend themselves from Northern aggression. It was a War Between Nations.

*"Revolution against authority is not the same as war against tyranny."  
Pastor R.B. Thieme Jr., Laws of Divine Establishment, page 2.*



It is clear that God's law supersedes man's law, and when man's law clashes with God's law, it is God's law that must be obeyed, not man's. How far does this principle extend? Are we required to submit to every law and dictate of the State except those that would cause us to go against our religious beliefs? Do Christians have the freedom to resist the State **only** in matters of faith? What about matters of freedom and justice? Can Christians legitimately resist tyranny on those grounds?

Those who embrace Viewpoint 2 would say, "No".

**ROMANS 13, LESSON #2** (8-15-10)

### **VIEWPOINT 3**

Those who hold this viewpoint believe **God limited the authority of government not only in matters of faith, but also in matters of freedom.** This certainly was the viewpoint of our Founding Fathers. They believed:

- God has given all mankind unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and property.
- The purpose of government is to respect and protect those rights.
- When government abuses those rights, it loses its right to govern.
- "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God." This became a slogan of the colonists.

Were our founding fathers wrong to resist the tyranny forced on them?

Is the Declaration of Independence something to be proud of or is it an example of men who disobeyed God by going against His established order of authority?

### *Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence*

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."*

Is this true? Does God give all men certain unalienable rights that are impossible to lose, surrender, or transfer? If not, where do our rights come from? Does God give kings and governments the power to grant whatever rights they choose to give the people and to deny or revoke all others? Does that sound like what a just and sovereign God would authorize?

***Isaiah 5:21&23 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And clever in their own sight! 23) Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!***

***Isaiah 10:1-2 Woe to those who enact evil statutes, And to those who constantly record unjust decisions, 2) So as to deprive the needy of justice, And rob the poor of My people of their rights, In order that widows may be their spoil, And that they may plunder the orphans.***

*"That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted by Men,*

Is this true? Is the purpose of government to secure the God given rights of the people? If God doesn't establish kings and governments to protect and respect the unalienable rights that He has given to the people then what is their purpose? Unfortunately, many today believe the purpose of government is to provide for or take care of the people.

*"deriving their just power from the consent of the governed."*

Is this true? Do those in government derive their power from the people? That would mean that those in government are the servants of the people. Their job – protect the rights of the people.

*“That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends [protecting the rights of the people], it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government . . . “*

Is this true? Is this one of the God-given rights of the people, to alter or abolish a government that no longer protects or respects their rights and institute a new one? If the answer is no, then we should condemn the founding fathers along with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. It is inconsistent and contradictory to claim that it's wrong to resist the government when freedom is on the line and then praise and celebrate those who did that very thing.

If the colonists were wrong, why did God grant them victory over the tyranny of King George? England was the super power of the world with the mightiest army of that time and the colonies were inexperienced, ill prepared, and out-numbered. Certainly, they could not have won their freedom without God's help. They asked for divine providence and received it. They were not condemned for resisting evil, they were rewarded.

The following is an excerpt from an article from Pastor Chuck Baldwin entitled, **“My Country, Right or Wrong”**:

*“To America's founders, patriotism had everything to do with the love of liberty, not the love of government! Today's brand of patriotism (at least as expressed by many) is totally foreign to the fundamental principles of liberty upon which America was built. I'm talking about the idea that government is an end and aim in itself; the idea that government must be protected from the people; the idea that bigger government equals better government; the idea that criticism of the government makes one unpatriotic; the idea that government is a panacea for all our ills; and the idea that loyalty to the nation equals loyalty to the government. All of this is a bunch of bull manure!*

*“When government--ANY GOVERNMENT--stops protecting the liberties of its citizens, and especially when it begins trampling those liberties, it has become a "destructive" power, and needs to be altered or abolished. Period.*

*“Can any honest, objective citizen not readily recognize that the current central government in Washington, D.C., long ago stopped protecting the God-given rights of free men, and has become a usurper of those rights? Is there the slightest doubt in the heart of any lover of liberty that the biggest threat to our liberties is not to be found in any foreign capital, but in that putrid province by the Potomac?*

*“Therefore, we must cast off this phony idea that we owe some kind of devotion to the "system." Away with the notion that vowing to protect and prolong the "powers that be" makes us "good" Americans. The truth is, there is very little in Washington, D.C., that is worthy of protecting or prolonging. The "system" is a ravenous BEAST that is gorging itself on our liberties!*

*“Patriotism has nothing to do with supporting a President, or being loyal to a political party, or anything of the sort.*

*“Is it patriotic to support our country (which almost always means our government), "right or wrong"? This is one of the most misquoted clichés in American history, by the way. Big Government zealots (on both the right and the left) use this phrase often to try to stifle opposition by making people who would fight for smaller government appear "unpatriotic.”*

*"The cliché, "My country, right or wrong," comes from a short address delivered on the floor of the US Senate by Missouri Senator Carl Schurz. Taking a strong anti-imperialist position and having his patriotism questioned because of it, Schurz, on February 29, 1872, said, "The senator from Wisconsin cannot frighten me by exclaiming, 'My country, right or wrong.'*

*"In one sense I say so, too. My country--and my country is the great American Republic. My country, right or wrong; if right, to be kept right; and if wrong, to be set right."  
(Source: The Congressional Globe, vol. 45, p. 1287)*

*"Patriotism means we love freedom. It means we understand that freedom is a gift of God. It means we understand that government has only one legitimate function: to protect freedom. It means that our love of liberty demands that we oppose, alter, or even abolish ANY FORM of government that becomes destructive to these ends. And it means that we will never allow government to steal liberty from our hearts."*



There is a very common mistake that many people make when they consider [Romans 13:1-7](#). They fail to recognize that these verses come from the perspective of a government operating properly as a minister of God for good and the people's responsibility to submit to it. **To apply the submission of those verses to a government that has become tyrannical and a minister of Satan for evil is a gross misapplication.**

What should Christians do when their own government becomes their enemy? Do they have any recourse? Of course they can pray but does God give them the right to defend themselves? He gives them the right to defend themselves against criminals on the street but what about criminals in office? Criminals in office have the power to do much more harm than the criminal on the street.

*"My own line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear as a ray of light. Not all the treasures of the world, so far as I believe, could have induced me to support an offensive war, for I think it murder; but if a thief breaks into my house, burns and destroys my property, and kills or threatens to kill me, or those that are in it, and to "bind me in all cases whatsoever" to his absolute will, am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me, whether he who does it is a king or a common man; my countryman or not my countryman; whether it be done by an individual villain, or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference; neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other. The Crisis, by Thomas Paine, Dec. 23, 1776*

Many believe the solution is to vote the criminals out of office. But what if nearly every office-holder and candidate running for office are liars? People find themselves voting not for the candidate they can truly support, but for a candidate who is the lesser of two evils. What do you wind up with when you vote for the lesser of two evils? You still wind up with evil.

*"For years I have been voting for and supporting minor party candidates. People ask why do I always pick a loser and waste my vote? I make those poor souls think twice when I tell them: 'No I am picking a winner who will lose. But you, my friends, have been picking losers who always win.'" The Constitution That Never Was, Ralph Boryszewski, 1995, xviii*

**Exodus 18:21 . . . Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them, as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.**

People do not choose their leaders these days by the qualities given above. How many politicians running for office fear God, are men of truth, and hate dishonest gain?

*"All of our political and military leaders pay lip service to this 'rule of law', and all of them solemnly swear to uphold, obey, and defend the Constitution. However, for many of them, in this area, as in so many others, their oaths of office are meaningless, empty words that they regularly ignore and willingly violate."*

*The New American magazine, July 5, 2010 Proper Use of the U.S. Military, by George B. Wallace, p.12*

The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, and the Bill of Rights are the safeguards we have against our own government enslaving us. When the government is no longer bound by the chains of the Constitution, there is tyranny.

*"In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution." Thomas Jefferson*

*"Submission is due to all constitutional laws . . . Unlimited submission, however, is not due [owed] to government in a free state. There are certain boundaries beyond which submission cannot be justly required, nor is therefore due [required]." Minister John Tucker of Newbury, Mass. Election Sermon, 1771,*

Only the foolish or naive think that kings or governments will restrain themselves and when the people allow government officials to routinely break their oaths of office without holding them accountable, freedom is lost.

*"History affords no example of any nation, country, or people, long free, who did not take some care of themselves; and endeavor to guard and secure their own liberties. Power is of a grasping, encroaching nature, and operating according to mere will, whenever it meets with no balance, check control, or opposition of any kind." Minister Jonathan Mayhew of Boston, Sermon, 1766*



**But how can Christians hold government officials accountable if they believe the Bible requires them to submit to governmental tyranny?**

### **ROMANS 13, LESSON #3** (8-22-10)

*"He that rebels against reason is a real rebel, but he that in defense of reason rebels against tyranny has a better title to "Defender of the Faith," than George the Third." The Crisis, by Thomas Paine, Jan. 13, 1777*

*"As tyranny, oppression and usurpation become more commonplace in America and throughout the world, one begins to see a war being silently yet diligently waged against God, the Bible, and Christianity. Like the political war against rights, the religious war is waged by our enemy with the aims of destroying the protections that guard the rights of Life, Liberty, and Property, as Samuel Adams stated in 1776:" Life, Liberty, and Property, by Charles A. Weisman, Weisman Publications 1997,p. 39*

*"I fully agree in opinion with the celebrated Author, that Freedom or Slavery will prevail in a country according as the dispositions and manners of the people render them fit for one or the other; and I have long been convinced that our Enemies have made it an object, to eradicate from the minds of the people a general sense of true religion and virtue, in hopes thereby the more easily to carry their point of enslaving them." The Writings of Samuel Adams, H. Cushing, ed. N.Y., 1904, v.3, p. 286*

*"We are compelled to ask how is it that so much corruption, unlawfulness, evil acts, and government encroachment upon individual rights came about in the land? The old common law along with the rights of Life, Liberty, and Property have eroded away, because the religion of the people has eroded away." Life, Liberty, and Property, by Charles A. Weisman, Weisman Publications 1997,p. 39*

Nearly all of those who have acquired the power of office use it unethically or unlawfully for their own aggrandizement and to remain in power. They have learned how to manipulate the system.

- Congress exempts themselves from the massive restrictions and laws it forces on the people.
- Each new Congress refuses to be bound by the enactments of the previous Congress.
- Congress has unconstitutionally transferred its responsibility over our economy to a private corporation called the Federal Reserve.
- Our president can decide at any time to thrust our country into war because those in Congress refuse to insist that they must make a Declaration of War before our soldiers are sent into harm's way. Evidently, following the Constitution isn't politically expedient.

What are the people to do when the separation of power has broken down and all three branches of government are out of control?

- Certainly Congressional spending is out of control. National debt, \$13,000,000,000,000,
- That debt increases nearly \$4,000,000,000 a day
- Executive Branch: executive orders, signing statements, appointment of Czars
- The Judicial Branch: legislating from the bench, innocent plea change to not-guilty

What are Christians to do when the State takes away their children because they spanked them? What are they to do when they carry a weapon to protect themselves and their family but are fined, or jailed because they didn't have government permission to do so?

What are they to do if the government passes a law that prohibits the ownership of firearms?

When people become Christians, do they forfeit their right to be free? Do they forfeit their right to protect themselves and their children from anyone who would harm them or endanger them?

Does God deny them the right to resist these evils because they are matter of freedom rather than faith?

*“Many early English legal scholars such as John Locke had a profound impact on American thought. Locke claimed that the “Word of God” as fundamental law which is to be utilized as “a rule of righteousness to influence our lives” as a concrete means of “checking arbitrary government.”* *The Divine Right of Kings, J.N. Figgis, Cambridge, 1914, p. 311*

We rightly honor men and women who are willing to give their lives in order to protect our freedom from other countries who would try to harm or enslave us. But these same men and women are often scorned by Christians if they try to protect their own freedom by refusing to submit to the tyranny of their own government. Why? Because of a misinterpretation of **Rom 13**.

## **THE SCRIPTURES**

**Romans 13:1**, *Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*

Let's take a look at the first sentence. **Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities.** Literally: **“Every soul submit to superior authorities.”** Every person, no matter what his or her position in life may be, is answerable to authority. God is the ultimate authority and no legitimate authority exists apart from Him. Other Scriptures deal with the authority God has delegated in other areas such as marriage, the family, and the church. This verse deals with the general principle regarding authority in the civil realm. God has delegated certain authority to mankind in order to maintain and preserve the human race.

*“Perhaps the best solution, then, is to view [Romans] 13:1–7 as a general statement about how the Christian should relate to government, with exceptions to this advice assumed but not spelled out here.”* *D. A. Carson, New Bible Commentary : 21st Century Edition, Rev. Ed. of: The New Bible Commentary. 3rd Ed. /Edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), Ro 12:9.*

Next sentence . . . **For there is no authority except from God . . .** No one has authority from himself since all legitimate authority has been delegated by God.

When one assumes authority that is not from God, then it is counterfeit, illegitimate, and therefore requires no respect or submission.

This concept is similar to the structure of authority in our country. The United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights were instituted to be the supreme law of the land. Any law, code, rule, regulation or statute that is contrary to the Constitution is counterfeit, illegitimate and requires no respect or submission.

*"All laws which are repugnant to the Constitution are null and void"*

*Marbury vs. Maddison, 5 US (2 Cranch) 137, 174, 176, (1803)*

*"It's [the Constitution] conception of power was Christian: power is ministerial, not legislative, i.e., powers in any area, church, state, school, or family, are not endowed with ability to create laws apart from the higher law but only to administer fundamental law as man is able to grasp and approximate it. Civil government is thus an administrator rather than a creator of law, it is not sovereign over law but is under law. The doctrine of express powers [government has only the powers expressed in the Constitution] is a strong limitation on even the administrative or ministerial role of civil government." This Independent Republic, Rousas Hohn Rushdoony, 2001 pp.35-36*

*"An unconstitutional act is not law; it confers no rights, imposes no duties; affords no protection; it creates no office; it is in legal contemplation, as inoperative as though it had never been passed."*  
*Norton vs. Shelby County 118 US 425 p. 442*

Romans 13 Revisited, by Chuck Baldwin, Feb.27, 2009, New With A View.Com

*"We in the United States of America do not live under a monarchy. We have no king. There is no single governing official in this country. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with any man or any group of men. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with the President, the Congress, or even the Supreme Court. In America, the U.S. Constitution is the "supreme Law of the Land." Under our laws, every governing official publicly promises to submit to the Constitution of the United States. Do readers understand the significance of this distinction? I hope so.*

*"This means that in America the "higher powers" are not the men who occupy elected office, they are the tenets and principles set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Under our laws and form of government, it is the duty of every citizen, including our elected officials, to obey the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, this is how Romans Chapter 13 reads to Christians in America:*

#### **ROMANS 13, LESSON #4** (8-29-10)

***"Let every soul be subject unto the [U.S. Constitution.] For there is no [Constitution] but of God: the [Constitution] that be [is] ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the [Constitution], resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For [the Constitution is] not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the [Constitution]? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For [the Constitution] is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for [the Constitution] beareth not the sword in vain: for [the Constitution] is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for [the Constitution is] God's minister, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."***

*“Dear Christian friend, the above is exactly the proper understanding of our responsibility to civil authority in these United States, per the teaching of Romans Chapter 13.”*

The Bible puts restraints on those to whom God delegates authority and they are responsible to Him to stay within the limits He has set. The Bill of Rights puts limits on those in government and they are responsible to the people and to God to stay within those limits. They are accountable both to God and the people.

It is difficult for some people these days to accept the fact that our nation has essentially abandoned the rule of law under the Constitution and now operates unconstitutionally through executive orders, statutes, codes, rules, and regulations that have not been enacted into positive law. Positive law is a law that in the exact words approved and passed by Congress.

The federal government has grown so large and so corrupt that it makes little difference who controls any branch of it. The money interests can buy any candidate they want and outspend all the tea parties and protesters combined while any candidate that doesn't make his peace with the establishment [insiders in Washington D.C.] will subsequently be destroyed by the media.

Congress routinely passes unconstitutional bills that are signed by the President and allowed by the Supreme Court to violate the rights of the people. Slowly, incrementally, and over time, this encroachment on our rights has been tolerated by the people to where the people have become the servants and the government is now the master.

*“There are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the of the people by the gradual and silent encroachment of those in power, than by violent an sudden usurpation. ~James Madison ~*

**Rom.1:1 . . . and those which exist are established by God.**

Some misunderstand this sentence and think that any authority in existence, whether good or bad, is established by God. Not so. There are many who have delegated authority to themselves, authority that did not come from God nor was established by God. Dictators, tyrants, despots, war lords, mafia heads, banking syndicates, etc. certainly have power and they assert their authority, but it's not legitimate because it was not delegated to them from God.

**are established by God.** TASSO (τασσω) part. per. pas.; to arrange, appoint, establish; perfect tense means God completed the task of arranging or delegating authority in the past and the results continue into the present.

Since the authority structure to govern man was established by God and delegated by God, anyone who tries to establish their own authority apart from Him is not legitimate.

**Habakkuk 1:7 . . . They [the Chaldeans] are dreaded and feared. Their justice and authority originate with themselves.**

The Chaldeans, also known as the Babylonians, were cruel, ruthless, pagans **whose authority structure originated with themselves** and had nothing to do with the authority structure God established. King Nebuchadnezzar thought he was answerable to no one, not even to God, and the people's rights were ignored.

God sometimes uses pagan nations to discipline His people but He doesn't approve of anyone who ignores His authority and abuses people. God humbled Nebuchadnezzar and he eventually became a believer.

**Romans 13:2**

**Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.**

**Therefore he** (KJV) . . . **“Whosoever therefore”**, (NKJV) & (ESV) **“Therefore whoever”**. The context includes anyone, whether citizen or ruler.

. . . **resists** . . . ANTISTASSO (αντιτασσω) part. pm; used metaphorically to set oneself in opposition to or in array against; to resist. The one who resists the order of authority that God established has opposed God.

. . . **has opposed** . . . ANTHISTEMI (ανθιστημι) v. rai; compound word, ANTI, against + HISTEMI, to stand = to stand against, to resist or to defy. The act of opposition occurs in the past but the results of that resistance continues on.

. . . **ordinance** . . . DIATAGE (διαταγη) n. dsf; order or arrangement. Here it refers to the order or arrangement of authority from God.

*“The man who withstands the official authority ordained by God is in conflict with God’s “ordinance” acc. to Rom. 13:2. Obviously this does not mean that every governmental decree is God’s ordinance. διαταγή refers rather to God’s “ordaining” according to v. 1b.”* Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

This verse is based on the premise of **verse 1** concerning legitimate authority that was established by God. Anyone who resists legitimate authority, whether he’s a citizen resisting the one who governs or the one who governs resisting God, is opposing the ordinance of God.

**Therefore he** [citizen or ruler] **who resists** [legitimate] **authority has opposed the ordinance** [order or arrangement of authority] **of God;**

*“It should be noted that [John] Adams, in opposing the idea of sovereignty, insisted on the necessity of a double responsibility in civil government, to ‘earth’ i.e., society, and to ‘heaven’ or God. Responsibility connotes subordination; we are under those to whom we are responsible.”*

*“Man, however, and civil government are and must be responsible agencies. If transcendental responsibility, the subordination to God, be removed, then man becomes a creature of the state and responsible to it, and the aseity or self-derived being of the state is asserted.”*  
*Ibid p.36*

It is important to recognize that **verses 1 & 2** emphasize God’s arrangement of authority. Rulers are under God’s authority and citizens are under the ruler’s authority. When both are submitting to the authority over them, all is well. When either one fails to submit to God’s arrangement of authority, they receive God’s condemnation.

. . . **and they** [citizen or ruler] **who have opposed** [God’s arrangement of authority] **will receive condemnation upon themselves.**

Many fail to recognize that not only the citizen but also the ruler must subordinate himself to authority, so they are unsure what to do when an arrogant, insubordinate ruler assumes power and authority that was not delegated to him by God.

*“Much too often, the modern church has sought peace and compromise with the world. As a consequence, the church has compromised and allowed the tide of humanism to roll over society and encompass it.*

*“Nowhere has this been more true than in the Christian community’s silence and acquiescence to the ever growing power and unconstitutionality of the federal and state governments and their agencies. The state is abusing its power. It is up to the Christian community, which knows that the state is not absolute, to stop. As long, however, as the state does not claim absolute authority and autonomy, it can exercise a lawful role in establishing order and civil justice.*



*"In this capacity, the state is called the servant of God (Rom. 13:4). The problem arises when the state claims not a relative and derivative authority, but an absolute and autonomous one.*

*"In modern America, the state does not openly claim divine worship, as pagan Rome did; it permits churches to carry on their worship as before. But in effect it is seeking to make itself the center of all human loyalties, the goal of all human aspirations, the source of all human values, and the final arbiter of all human destiny. In so doing, without using the language of religion, it is claiming to be divine, and it is creating a potentially devastating conflict with the church.*

*"We are the beneficiaries of a common law tradition that itself is the product of revolutions. Ultimately, the history of Western civilization is the history of Christians' struggles against unlawful State and the anti-Christian theologies that have undergirded it.*

### **Romans 13:3**

***For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same;***

This verse continues the standpoint of rulers who are functioning within the authority structure designed by God. This means that they are not opposing God but are submitting to Him and are acting as His servant.

***. . . For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil.***

Those with good behavior have nothing to fear from legitimate authority, but those who are evil have good reason to fear rulers who have been given authority from God to punish evil-doers. What is good behavior? The Bible covers this in the following verses:

***Matthew 7:12 . . . "Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.***

***Luke 6:31 . . . And just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way.***

America's Founders knew about good behavior.

*"Some people will wait for disaster to swallow them up, and others will choose like America's Founders to passionately fight 'for a nation, conceived in liberty' and dedicated to the two fundamental laws that make an advance civilization possible" "The Two Laws:*

*"1) Do all you have agreed to do. 2) Do not encroach on other persons or their property." Ancient Rome, How It Affects You Today, Richard J. Maybury, 2004, Bluestocking Press, p33*

What is bad behavior?

***Galatians 5:19-21 . . . Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.***

***Romans 1:29-32 . . . being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30) slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31) without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;***

***32) and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.***

**... Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do [v. pam] what is good, and you will have praise from the same ...**

When a person treats others the way he would like to be treated, he should have nothing to fear from the governing authorities. God has written His natural law into the heart of man so he knows what is right and what is wrong. It is when he goes against this that he should fear governing authorities.

***Romans 2:14-15 . . . For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15) in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them . . .***

**ROMANS 13, LESSON #5** (9-5-10)

## **QUICK REVIEW OF LESSONS # 1-4**

1. Dr. David Ramsay gave an oration describing the state of the union July 4, 1794, eight years after the Colonists won their independence from England.

*“No enormous salaries are received by the few at the expense of the many. No taxes are levied but such as are laid equally on the legislator and private citizen.*

*“So great is the responsibility of men in high stations among us that it is the fashion to rule well. It is one of the peculiar privileges we enjoy in consequence of independence that no individual—no party interest—no foreign influence—can plunge us into war.*

*“The sovereignty rests in ourselves; and instead of receiving the privileges of free citizens as a boon [favor] from the hands of our rulers, we defined their powers by a constitution of our own framing which prescribed to them that thus far they might go but no farther.*

*“The wise people . . . never form a new township without making arrangements that secure to its inhabitants the instruction of youth and the public preaching of the Gospel. Hence their children are early taught to know their rights and to respect themselves.*

*“To possess such a country with the blessings of liberty and peace together with that security of person and property which results from a well-ordered, efficient government is—or ought to be—[a] matter of constant thankfulness.*

Things have certainly changed but not for the better.

2. There are people alive today who can remember when:
  1. There was no property tax.
  2. There was no income tax.
  3. There was no inheritance tax.
  4. There was no capital gains tax.
  5. There was no social security tax.
  6. People had real money, gold and silver coins. (1910 Houses cost \$5,000)
  7. There were “Peace Officers” rather than “Police Officers”.
  8. There was no political correctness or celebration of diversity or multiculturalism. No African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Asian-Americans, just Americans.
  9. Immigrants were legal, were eager to learn English, and yearned to assimilate into our culture.
  10. People enjoyed true privacy, no surveillance cameras, no eaves-dropping, no body searches or scans.

11. No welfare programs, food stamps or FEMA; family, friends, and churches took care of people in need.
  12. There was no EPA, OSHA, FBI, CIA, BATF, DHS, NATO, SEATO, UN, USDA, BLM, HUD, FCC, FTC, INS, FEMA, DOT, DOE, IRS, IMF, no World Bank or World Court.
3. What is the Biblical view of the relationship between a Christian and government?  
There are three basic viewpoints:

**VIEWPOINT 1:** God has given unlimited authority to those who govern over us, and we are to submit to them without question. We are to obey every law regardless how odious, oppressive, or immoral it may be.

- a. ALL authority delegated by God is limited. The authority of Parents, Husbands, Pastors, Bosses, Teachers, and those in government is limited by God.
- b. What happens when governments consider their authority unlimited?  
Genocide Statistics Over the Last Century: Over 89 million people were murdered by their own government.
- c. God is sovereign and has ultimate authority in the universe, but even His authority is limited by His perfect attributes.
- d. Would God give unlimited power to men [with fallen natures] to rule over us and then condemn us for resisting when they abuse us? Does that sound like what a just and righteous God would do?

**VIEWPOINT 2:** God has given only limited authority to government. There are times when one may refuse to submit to governing authorities in matters concerning faith that could be referred to as “**Biblical Civil Disobedience**”.

- a. *Princeton theologian Charles Hodge said, “We are to obey all that is in actual authority over us, whether their authority be legitimate or usurped, whether they are just or unjust.”*
- b. He believed that governmental authority is superior to the authority of one’s individual conscience. How can we please God if we act against our own conscience? And how can we be true to our conscience if we are required to obey every law, even unjust laws?  
**Rom. 14:23 . . . Whatever is not of faith** [conviction from one’s conscience] ***is sin.***
- c. If Mr. Hodge is correct, the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights should not be honored but condemned. For both recognize that every individual has God-given rights in which no one, not even the State, is free to ignore.
- d. Should our founding fathers be celebrated for resisting the tyranny of King George III or repudiated for resisting the authority over them? Some would say they were guilty of Civil Disobedience and were sinning against God.
- e. Not all Civil Disobedience is legitimate but there are cases of legitimate Civil Disobedience which may be called **Biblical Civil Disobedience**. There are several examples of this in the Bible, **Ex. 1:15-20, Josh. 2:1-18, Esther 5, Dan. 3:1-30, Dan. 6, Matt. 2:1-13, Acts 5:29.**
- f. **Biblical Civil Disobedience** and **Revolution** are not the same thing. Biblical Civil Disobedience is resistance which is defensive, whereas Revolution is aggression which is offensive in nature. God does not advocate nor condone revolution against authority.
- g. What is commonly called the Revolutionary War was not a revolution and should be called the War of Independence. Also, the war that is commonly called the “Civil War” or the “War Between the States” wasn’t a revolution either.

It also was not a civil war or a war between states. In both wars, people refused to further tolerate the tyranny over them and were forced to defend themselves when they were invaded.

- h. Do Christians have the freedom to resist the State **only** in matters of faith? What about matters of freedom and justice? Can Christians legitimately resist tyranny on those grounds?

**VIEWPOINT 3:** God limits the authority of government, not only in matters of faith, but also in matters of freedom. This certainly was the viewpoint of our Founding Fathers. They believed:

- God has given all mankind unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and property.
  - The purpose of government is to respect and protect those rights.
  - When government abuses those rights, it loses its right to govern.
  - “Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God.” This became a slogan of the colonists.
- a. The Colonists did not believe they were going against God by embracing the principles set forth above and asked for His blessing upon declaring their independence from tyranny. Were they wrong? Should we celebrate or mourn on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?
- b. There is a common mistake many people make when they consider [Romans 13:1-7](#). They think that these verses direct people to submit to government no matter how tyrannical or evil, but this is a gross misapplication. They fail to recognize that these verses depict a government operating properly as a minister of God for good and to that is what the people are directed to submit.
- c. What should Christians do when their own government becomes their enemy? Do they have any recourse? Many believe the solution is to vote the criminals out of office. But what if nearly every office-holder and candidate running for office are liars? People find themselves voting **not** for the candidate they can truly support, but for a candidate who is the lesser of two evils. What do you wind up with when you vote for the lesser of two evils? You still wind up with evil.

*“For years I have been voting for and supporting minor party candidates. People ask why do I always pick a loser and waste my vote? I make those poor souls think twice when I tell them: ‘No I am picking a winner who will lose. But you, my friends, have been picking losers who always win.’ ”* *The Constitution That Never Was*, Ralph Boryszewski, 1995, xviii

***Exodus 18:21 . . . Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them, as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens.***

People do not choose their leaders these days by the qualities given above. How many politicians running for office fear God, are men of truth, and hate dishonest gain?

- d. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, and the Bill of Rights are the safeguards we have against our own government enslaving us. When the government is no longer bound by the chains of the Constitution, there is tyranny.
- e. Only the foolish or naive think that kings and governments will restrain themselves, but when people allow government officials to routinely break their oaths of office without holding them accountable, freedom is lost.
- f. **But how can Christians hold government officials accountable if they believe the Bible requires them to submit to tyranny?**

*“We are compelled to ask how is it that so much corruption, unlawfulness, evil acts, and government encroachment upon individual rights came about in the land? The old common law along with the rights of Life, Liberty, and Property have eroded away, because the religion of the people has eroded away.” Life, Liberty, and Property, by Charles A. Weisman, Weisman Publications 1997,p.*

*“Many early English legal scholars such as John Locke had a profound impact on American thought. Locke claimed that the “Word of God” as fundamental law which is to be utilized as “a rule of righteousness to influence our lives” as a concrete means of “checking arbitrary government. The Divine Right of Kings, J.N. Figgis, Cambridge, 1914, p. 311.*

## THE SCRIPTURES

**Romans 13:1 Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**

- a. Literally: **Every soul submit to superior authorities**. Every person, no matter what his or her position may be, is answerable to authority. God is the ultimate authority and no legitimate authority exists apart from Him.
- b. This is a general statement regarding submission to superior authorities.
- c. No one has authority from himself since all legitimate authority has been delegated by God. When one assumes authority that is not from God, then it is counterfeit, illegitimate, and therefore requires no respect or submission.

**Romans 13:2 . . . Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.**

Anyone, citizen or ruler, who resists the legitimate authority over them has opposed the authority structure of God and brings condemnation on themselves.

**Romans 13:3 . . . For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same;**

- a. This verse continues from the standpoint of rulers who are functioning within the authority structure designed by God.
- b. The Bible puts restraints on those to whom God delegates authority and they are responsible to Him to stay within the limits He has set.  
The Bill of Rights puts limits on those in government and they are responsible and accountable to both the people and to God to stay within those limits.
- c. Good behavior is treating others the way you would like to be treated and fulfilling any commitments you make. Evil would be the opposite of this.
- d. God has given rulers the authority to punish evil doers but **only** evil doers. Those who do not encroach on the rights of others have good behavior and should be praised, not punished.
- e. People have grown accustomed to being punished through fines or imprisonment when they have not encroached on the rights of others. Millions of people receive such punishment every year for such things as: not having a seatbelt buckled, carrying a weapon for self-defense, spanking their children, and a multitude of other things that are not evil.
- f. Federal, State, County, and Local governments create literally tens of thousands of codes, rules, statutes, and regulations every year which impose stiff penalties on people who are trying to provide for their families, minding their own business, and treating their neighbors the way they would like to be treated. This is evil, but it's not the people but the government that is guilty of it.

## **END OF QUICK REVIEW**

**Romans 13:4**

***For it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.***

***For it is . . .*** (ESV) ***“for rulers”***, (KJV) (NIV) (RSV) ***“for he”***. Actually the Greek says, γαρ εστιν, and ESTIN is the present active indicative third person singular of EIMI and can be translated “he”, “she”, or “it”. ***“for he keeps on being”*** is probably the best translation.

***. . . minister . . .*** DIAKONOS (διακονος) n. nsm; a minister, servant, or deacon.

***. . . for it*** [he or she] ***is*** [keeps on being] ***a minister*** [servant] ***of God to you for good.***

***. . . for it*** [government] ***is*** [is designed to be] ***a minister*** [servant] ***of God to you for good.***

**God never designed government to be a minister of evil !** When it becomes evil, it no longer is a servant of God for good to us but becomes a servant of Satan. God designed the structure of civil authority in the human realm to be subject to Himself in doing good whether it is a monarchy, an oligarchy, or a republic.

**Proverbs 8:15-16 . . . By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. 16) "By me princes rule, and nobles, all who judge rightly.**

**God has limited governmental authority to act on his behalf only for good. it has NO legitimate authority when it steps outside of that limitation.**

When a ruler encroaches on a Christian's faith or his freedom, he becomes a servant of Satan. . God does not require us to submit to Satan or his servants. **James 4:7 & 1 Peter 5:9** tell us to resist the devil.

Parallel Verse is **1 Peter 2:13-14 . . . Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14) or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.**

***. . . But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it (he) does not bear the sword for nothing*** [capital punishment] . . .

This is a warning to anyone who would defy God and His servants who enforce His righteous standards. Capital punishment is a biblical principle that should be practiced today.

**Genesis 9:6 . . . Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.**

**Exodus 21:12 . . . He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.**

**Leviticus 24:17 . . . And if a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death.**

***. . . for it (he) is a minister*** [servant] ***of God for good . . .***

For the second time in this verse, we are reminded that government is the servant of God.

A servant is under obligation to render obedience to the one who has authority over him. He is not free to do whatever he wants.

He is empowered to give praise to those who do good and to execute God's wrath on those who do evil.

***. . . an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.***

***“For God has delegated to civil magistrates in place of parents the right to punish evil-doers.”***  
***Martin Luther, Luther's Cat. Writings, pg.79.***

It is very important to understand what this verse does not say. It does not say government has the authority or sanction from God to bring wrath on the one who practices good! NEVER! This is a very strong limitation that God has put on government. **When governing authorities ignore this limitation and cross over the line of righteousness into evil, they become criminals and forfeit any of their delegated authority from God.** God does not authorize wrath or evil against those who do good !

### **ROMANS 13, LESSON #7** (9-19-10)

It follows then, **if rulers lose their delegated authority from God when they do evil, we are not required to submit to them because they no longer have legitimate authority.**

*“Since all authority comes from God, it should be that all valid governments be based on God’s laws. When officers or judges in authority do not exercise that authority for its designed purpose, the obligation to them would consequently cease to exist. This was the basis of the American Revolution in 1776.”*

*A Handbook of Biblical Law, Charles A. Weisman, 1991 Weisman Publications, p. 66*

This principle can be seen in the structure of the united States of America. The Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, superior to the Constitution for the united States, represent the highest authority in the land, of course, under God’s authority. They don’t give us our rights, they recognize the rights we already have. Government is to secure our God-given rights. Every government official takes an oath to honor, uphold, and defend the Constitution for the united States of America, and when any official steps outside the boundaries set by those documents, he becomes a criminal to be dishonored rather than honored, and punished rather than obeyed.

*“All political power is inherent in the people” and that “any government that becomes destructive of these rights has forfeited its authority.” Consider this section a restatement of the truths outlined in the Declaration of Independence. Republic Magazine, Continental Congress Remembered, by Michael Bannarik, p. 6*

**Proverbs 16:12 . . . It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, for a throne is established on righteousness.** [God has delegated authority to establish righteousness, not wickedness.]

**Proverbs 17:15 . . . He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.**

**Judges 9:1-57,** Government officers who commit conspiracy, treachery, or murder are to be put to death.

The problem today is that people have become so diluted as to think that a person who resists an evil, unconstitutional law is wrong and the government that brings wrath upon him is right. This mindset has developed over a long period of time as the people acquiesced to the ever growing encroachments of a government that seems to know no limits.

*“Arbitrary power . . . must be introduced by slow degrees, and as it were, step by step, lest the people should see it approach.” ~ Lord Chesterfield ~*

The idea of **limiting civil authority** is nothing new. The men who founded our country were very intent on living according to the dictates of the Bible, and they certainly believed God has given only limited authority to civil government.

*“When so ever the general government assumes undesignated power, its acts are unauthoritative, void, and of no force.” ~ Thomas Jefferson ~*

*“The source most often cited by the founding fathers was the Bible, which accounted for 34 percent of all citations. ~ John Eidsmoe ~ Christianity and the Constitution, p. 51*

*“America was founded on the common law model that assumes there is a higher law than any government’s law. But over the decades this model has been gradually subverted and replaced by Roman Law . . . Justice is whatever lawmakers say it is.”*

*Ancient Rome, How It Affects You Today, Richard J. Maybury, 2004, Bluestocking Press, p33*

*“Puritans were not content to let abject submission totally define their relationship with authority. Even more than persons living in a permissive society, they felt the need to raise defenses against the fathers who constantly threatened judgment and rebuke. The inward impulse was expressed in Puritan political philosophy as the doctrine of rights and the rule of law. Even conservatives asserted that ‘God has not Subjected the Lives and Liberties of the Ruled, to the Arbitrary Will and Pleasure of Rulers. ‘He gave ‘Laws to their Authority,’ so that they were not ‘at Liberty to Pursue and Accomplish their own Desire.’ The law defined the line beyond which rulers became tyrants and resistance became a duty.”*

*Richard L. Bushman, From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order to Connecticut, 1690-1765*

*“Calvinists not only believe civil government is ordained and established by God, they also believe that God has given civil government only limited authority. The same power that grants authority to government also limits that authority.*

*“The concept of limited government is a fundamental principle of the U.S. constitutional theory – ours is a government of limited, delegated powers. The framers of the Constitution envisioned our federal government with only the powers delegated to it by the people through the Constitution. [All political power resides in the people.]*

*“Rutherford in particular emphasized limited government. The people, acting under the will of God, had given the civil government only limited authority, and they had given it conditionally - they reserved the right to terminate their covenant with the ruler if the ruler violated the covenant terms. Consequently the ruler is acting without legitimate authority if he violates the laws of God and nature by suppressing the basic liberties of the people. In such instances he is not to be obeyed. In fact, he is to be resisted. It is the Christian’s duty to resist – by force if necessary. ~ Samuel Rutherford ~ Lex Rex, or The Law and the Prince, 1644 pp. 1, 6-7.*

*“Lex, Rex is a book by Samuel Rutherford published in 1644 on limited government and constitutionalism. The Latin title can be translated Law [is] King and . . . the book’s contents, opposes the doctrine of “Rex Lex” where the king himself is the law. Rutherford’s refutation of “Rex Lex” was based on Deuteronomy 17, and it supported the rule by law rather than rule by men . . . It laid the foundation for later political philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke and thus for modern political systems such as that of the United States. After the English Restoration, the authorities burned Lex, Rex and cited the author for high treason, which his death prevented from taking effect.” From Wikipedia*

*[The Law, Lex, should be over the King, Rex, Deut.17, supporting rule of Law.]*

*“Power comes from the barrel of a gun. Authority comes from being congruent [lining up] with natural/higher law [from God]. The federal government is all power and no authority. The Continental Congress of 2009, is all authority and no power. America is faced with a situation that has occurred repeatedly throughout history. The Continental Congress must now follow in the daring and noble tradition of the brave remnant who have carried the seeds of liberty through the flames of many a crumbling empire to plant them in the ash, the fertile soil of tyranny fallen. Now is the time that we must, and we will, secure a rebirth of liberty and law.”*  
*Republic Magazine, p. 16, Shaeffer Cox, Alaska Delegate to the Continental Congress of 2009.*

*“Algernon Sidney (1622-1683) served on the Council of the State of the Commonwealth under Cromwell’s Protectorate in 1652. He believed . . . rulers exercise only such power as the people have given them, and when rulers go beyond that and usurp additional power, the people have a right to resist.” ~ John Eidsmoe ~ Christianity and the Constitution, p. 69*



*“John Milton (1608-1674) was a political as well as a religious figure. An expert swordsman as well as a theologian. Milton defended the right to resist illegitimate usurpation of authority. Encyclopedia Britannica, 1896, s.v. “Milton, John”*

*“I believe fifteen basic principles which underlie the thinking of the founding fathers . . . which are either derived from, or at least compatible with, Christianity and the Bible. A belief that governments have only such powers as are delegated to them by the people in said covenants or compacts, and that when governments attempt to usurp powers not so delegated, they become illegitimate and are to be resisted.” John Eidsmoe, Christianity & the Constitution, p.72-73.*

*“An unjust law is no law at all, and there is a duty and obligation not to obey it.” ~Thomas Aquinas~*

Search the web for the Continental Congress of Nov.11, 2009 and “The Articles of Freedom.”

### **ROMANS 13, LESSON #8** (10-10-10)

#### **Romans 13:5**

***Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath but also for conscience ' sake . . .***

Fear of punishment or reprisals by governing authorities if we do evil is not the only reason we should submit to them. This may be why criminals submit, but there is another reason given for submitting to government mandates, and that is because of our conscience.

Most people only see one side of the conscience issue in this verse. If we didn't obey the law, it would go against our conscience because God commanded us to submit to governing authorities. Our conscience motivates us to submit. But what if the law is evil? What if it goes against the Bible or our God given-rights? In that case, our conscience would motivate us not to submit.

*“Paul makes it clear that our submission to civil authority must be predicated on more than fear of governmental retaliation. Notice, he said, "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Meaning, our obedience to civil authority is more than just "because they said so." It is also a matter of conscience.*

*This means we must think and reason for ourselves regarding the justness and rightness of our government's laws. Obedience is not automatic or robotic. It is a result of both rational deliberation and moral approbation. Romans 13 Revisited, by Chuck Baldwin, Feb.27, 2009, New With A View.Com*

We are all subject to Natural Law, the law **“written in our hearts”**, **Rom. 2:15**. William Blackstone was a studied and devoted Christian scholar who wrote

*“This law of nature, being co-eval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times: no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.”*  
Source: William Blackstone, "Of The Nature of Laws in General"

***. . . but also for conscience' sake . . .***

We are to do good in order to please God and to do what is right. Our own conscience should restrain us from doing what is evil. Our conscience tells us it is right to submit to what is good. The other side of that coin is that our conscience tells us it is wrong to submit to what is evil. The battle cry of the War of Independence in 1776 was, **“Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God”**. Some allege that this was not biblical because that phrase is not found in the Bible. However, just because a phrase is not found in the Bible does not mean the principle isn't there.

**James 4:7 . . . Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

[Are we not resisting evil when we resist the devil?]

**Ephesians 6:11 & 13 . . . Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 13) Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.**

*“Freedom without authority becomes anarchy, in which no one is free; but authority without freedom is tyranny, which ceases to be legitimate authority. No tyrant can remain in power without the consent and cooperation of his victims. R.B. Theime Jr., Christian Integrity Book*

*“He has therefore the freedom, the free will, the self-determination to choose between legitimate and illegitimate authority; legitimate authority delegated by God; illegitimate authority provided through the Satanic administration of the rulership of this world. Therefore, all human authority is a matter of human choice, human volition. Legitimate authority won’t work unless someone accepts that authority, and even illegitimate authority won’t work unless someone accepts that authority.*

*R.B. Theime Jr., Class notes Rev. 2*

## **THE NUREMBERG TRIALS**

Our conscience is a two-edged sword. It praises us when we do good and condemns us when we do bad. It praises us when we obey legitimate authority that is acting as a servant for good and it condemns us when we obey illegitimate authority acting as a servant for evil.

A good example of this is the Nuremberg Trials that were held in 1945 where war criminals were tried for infamous crimes against humanity. Every one of the defendants had the same defense.

They said they were not guilty because they were only following orders. They committed atrocities because they refused to disobey the authority over them.

This is the end result of the belief that we **do not** have the right to choose which orders/laws we will obey and which ones we will not obey. The majority of the war criminals were executed because the court realized that the authority of their own conscience superseded the authority of those over them.

The court’s verdict was correct because it was based on the right premise. When there is a clash between one’s conscience and those in authority, it is the conscience that should be followed. We are all responsible to God for the choices and decisions we make regardless of what those in authority may say. People have the right to disobey unjust laws and the dictates of the State when it violates their conscience.

Of course, this does not suggest that we should refuse to submit to injustice in trivial matters. Probably, the most prudent thing to do when you get convicted for speeding even though you weren’t speeding is to pay the fine and move on. The Declaration of Independence addressed this issue.

*“Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.”*

## **OUR JURY SYSTEM**

Americans actually operate under a three vote system.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Vote at the polls on election day
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vote as a juror on a Grand Jury
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Vote as a juror on a Trial Jury

The vote of a juror is the last safeguard against tyranny.

*“When someone is acting as a jury member during a courtroom trial, he has more power than the President, all of Congress, and all of the Judges combined. Congress can legislate (make law), the President or some other bureaucrat can make an order or issue regulations, and judges may instruct or make decisions, but no juror can ever be punished for voting “Not Guilty!” A juror can, with impunity, choose to disregard the instructions of any judge or attorney in rendering his vote. If only one juror should vote “No Guilty” for any reason, there is no conviction and no punishment at the end of the trial. Thus, those acting in the name of government must come before the common man to get permission to enforce law.”* Citizens Rule Book, Jury Handbook, p. 4

So the principle that submission to our conscience supercedes submission to odious laws is born out in our legal system consisting of independent jurors on Grand Juries and Trial Juries. Contrary to the lies that many judges tell juries these days, a juror has the right to not only judge the facts of the case but also the law itself. If a person is guilty of breaking a law but the juror considers the law to be oppressive or in error, he has the right to find that person “innocent”. This is a method of keeping the government within its bounds and it allows people to use their own consciences rather than the dictates of the State to determine what is right and what is wrong.

*“The jury has the right to judge the law as well as the fact in controversy.”*  
John Jay, 1<sup>st</sup> Chief Justice U.S. Supreme Court, 1789

*“The law itself is on trial quite as much as the cause which is to be decided.”*  
Harlan F. Stone, 12<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice U.S. Supreme Court, 1941

*“The jury has the right to determine both the law and the facts.”*  
Samuel Chase, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, 1796, Signer of the unanimous Declaration

*“The pages of history shine on the instances of the jury’s exercise of its prerogative to disregard instructions of the judge . . .”* U.S. vs. Dougherty, 473 F 2<sup>nd</sup> 1113, 1139, (1972)

*“To embarrass justice by a multiplicity of laws, or to hazard it by confidence in judges, are the opposite rocks on which all civil institutions have been wrecked.”*  
~ Johnson ~ engraved in the Minnesota State Capitol outside the Supreme Court Chambers

## **TAXES**

### **Romans 13:6**

***For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.***

***For because of this you also pay taxes . . .*** The authority structure of government for mankind requires support, therefore it is our duty to pay the taxes that are legitimately owed. So the context suggests that are paid for the support of those who are servants of God who devote their time and energies to administering government under God.

It is only right that those in government be supported by those they serve since their time is spent administering the affairs of government for the people.

***. . . for rulers are servants of God . . .*** This is the third time governing authorities are referred to as “ministers” or “servants” of God. The context consistently refers to rulers who are servants of God for good. Everything is predicated upon this fact. It is an error to apply the mandates of submission found in these verses to governing authorities who are ministers of Satan for evil.

Levying taxes is a serious business. Many wars have been fought over taxes. It certainly was an issue in the 1<sup>st</sup> War of Independence [“Revolutionary War”] as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> War of Independence [“the Civil War”].

*“To compel a man to subsidize with his taxes the propagation of ideas which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical.” ~ Thomas Jefferson ~*

... **servants of God** ... LEITOURGOS (λειτουργος) n. npm; from LÉITOS (n.f.), of the people + ÉRGON, work = one who does the work for someone else. This word is different from the word translated **“minister”** which is used twice in verse 4. The word there means service, but this word refers to someone who does work on the behalf of another.

### **ROMANS 13, LESSON #9** (10-17-10)

Governing authorities are to be supported by taxes from the people just as the Levites in Israel were supported by the twelve tribes.

... **devoting themselves to this very thing.** Rulers are to devote themselves to serving as God’s agents, praising those who do good and punishing those who do evil.

#### **Romans 13:7**

**Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.**

**Render to all what is due them: . . .** APODIDOMAI (αποδιδομαι) v. aam; to give or to do something necessary in fulfillment of an obligation or expectation. Notice that this verse does not command us to give an unlimited amount but rather places a limit on what is due them. We are commanded to give what is **due** them, nothing more and nothing less.

*“The people are paying the unrighteous tribute in hopes that the nation will at length revert to justice. But before that time comes, it is to be feared they will be so accustomed to bondage, as to forget they were ever free.” ~ Samuel Adams ~ 1771*

... **tax to whom tax is due** ... PHOROS (φορος) n. asm; a tax or tribute imposed on persons and their property annually in distinction from TÉLOS (5056), toll, which was usually levied on merchandise and travelers. We are to pay the taxes we owe.

... **custom to whom custom** ... TÉLOS (τελος) n. asn; toll, custom (i.e. indirect tax on goods).

... **fear to whom fear;** ... PHOBOS (φοβος) n. asm; in a moral sense, fear, reverence, respect, honor. We are to respect those to whom respect is due.

... **honor to whom honor** ... TIME (τιμη) n. asf; honour which one has by reason of rank and state of office which he holds.

Governing authorities who are servants of God for good should be supported by the people they serve and they deserve respect and honor for being good servants to God and the people.

Believers are to be balanced in their thinking and should have a humble respectful attitude toward everyone and especially those who hold positions of authority. However, this does not mean they are to be unthinking robots who have no right to modify their behavior when circumstances develop that threaten their welfare.

### **AN EVIL KING NOT RESISTED**

**Jeremiah 15:4** is an interesting verse that should be noted here. Manasseh was arguably the most horrendous, evil king Judah ever had. We see that God held the people responsible for not resisting the atrocious acts of their king !

**Jeremiah 15:4 . . . "And I [God] shall make them [the people] an object of horror among all the kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.**

If God held the people responsible for what the king did, then surely God expected them to resist him rather than submit to his evil acts and turn a blind eye to his wickedness. Throughout the ages, men have had to decide whether to submit to evil and do as they're told or to resist and do what is right. God holds us responsible for what we decide.

*"Evil has no authority apart from human consent. We are the products of our own decisions. We are constantly assigning authority to evil people who represent the cosmic system. This is how dictators become oppressors of the people. This explains the rise of terror in the French Revolution, as well as the rise of Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler." R.B. Thieme Jr. Notes on "Authority" point 8d*

### **WHAT ABOUT THE 1ST CENTURY CHURCH?**

Some people point out that believers of the first century church at times submitted to what was oppressive and abusive authority by the Roman Empire. Therefore, shouldn't we follow their pattern and also submit to oppressive authority in our day? The problem with this is that it is not a fair comparison; it's like comparing apples with oranges.

It should be noted that the Jews were under occupation by Rome and had no contract, constitution, or agreement with Rome that recognized their rights. Our situation is different. We have a contract with those who have authority over us, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, by which our God-given rights are protected. Since every official in government as well as those in the military take an oath to support and defend the Constitution, they are accountable to God and the people to obey their oaths.

Some say Jesus never resisted governing authorities, so neither should we. First of all, that is not exactly true. The scribes [lawyers] and Pharisees represented governing authorities directly over the Jews, and on several occasions, Jesus resisted or refused to obey them.

**Matthew 15:1-3 . . . Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem, saying, 2) "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." 3) And He answered and said to them, "And why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"**

The Pharisees were alleging that Jesus' disciples were answerable to them for violating what was actually an illegitimate law. Jesus not only refused to instruct His disciples to submit to such an illegitimate law, but He rebuked the Pharisees for trying to impose such an illegitimate tradition/statute on the people as if it was part of the legitimate Mosaic law.

**Mark 7:9 . . . He [Jesus] was also saying to them [scribes and Pharisees], "You nicely set aside the commandment of God [to be a servant of God for good] in order to keep your tradition [in order to impose your own statutes and notions on the people]."**

In this rebuke and this incident, Jesus was demonstrating that a law is not legitimate because governing authorities say it is. Jesus did not require His disciples to submit to these governing authorities who were out of line.

Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees who were the civil authority directly over the Jews "**hypocrites**", "**blind guides**", "**fools**", "**whitewashed tombs full of dead men's bones**", and "**a brood of vipers**", **Matt. 23**.

*"In Acts 17 the Christians were accused of criminal acts. In Acts 17:6 we read that they had "turned the world upside down." In other words, they challenged the basic assumptions of the pagan culture.*

*“But what was their crime? Acts 17:7 tells us: “These all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.” This was an act of political treason. A popular myth invoked by 7 Christians and non-Christians alike to justify their refusal to stand against immoral state acts has been the assertion that Jesus and the apostles were pacifists. This is not true. The question of pacifism did not arise, but Jesus was certainly no quietist.*

*“Jesus Himself felt free to criticize not only the Jewish civil leaders, (John 18:23), but also the Roman-appointed ruler, Herod Antipas, in referring to him as a “fox” (Luke. 13:32). Jesus whipped the money changers and chased them out of the temple (John 2: 13-17). Following that, Christ would not allow any person to carry “any vessel through the temple” (Mark. 11: 16). Christ’s act of whipping the money changers and blocking the entrance to the temple were crimes. (Ultimately Christ is portrayed in the Book of Revelation as exercising righteous vengeance on the secular humanistic state.)” ~ Chuck Baldwin ~*

The Apostle Peter and other apostles understood this when they refused to submit to governing authorities demanding that they stop teaching the Word of God.

***Acts 5:27-29 . . . And when they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. And the high priest questioned them, 28) saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” 29) But Peter and the apostles answered and said, “We must obey God rather than men.”***

The Lord Jesus Christ was on a mission to get to the cross to pay for the sins of mankind. Many Jews wanted Him to be their leader and to deliver them by crushing the tyranny of Rome. But that was not His mission. Jesus could not be distracted from His mission to redeem mankind on the cross by getting embroiled in resisting unjust treatment from Rome.

Jesus Christ offered Himself and His Kingdom to the Jews, but they rejected both. Why would Jesus make an issue of an evil earthly king and kingdom when He was offering the people His own perfect Kingdom?

**ROMANS 13, LESSON #10** (10-24-10)

**FALSE ACCUSATIONS and ISSUES**

**Kingdom Now**

Some allege that Christians who resist tyranny or fight for freedom are out of line because they are trying to bring in God’s Kingdom apart from Christ. They also say that Christians are spiritual beings and are not to get entangled in the affairs of this world.

Mark Dinsmore, in the October, 2010 issue of “The Berean Call” magazine leveled these type of accusations against Pastor Chuck Baldwin because of his stand for freedom.

*“If he [Chuck Baldwin] truly seeks a ‘restored’ kingdom on earth where Christians may prosper in perpetuity, is his doctrine and determination very different from that which caused the Mormons to fight and to flee from state to state in pursuit of establishing their own fabled ‘Zion’?”*

Some believe that anyone who stands for freedom is a “**kingdom now**” advocate and that they are to be compared with Mormons. Were our founding fathers who purchased freedom with their own blood “kingdom now” advocates? Were they Mormons? What about those who answered the call to defend their families and country when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor? Should they be accused of not waiting for Christ’s Kingdom because they tried to bring in their own? I think not.

## Worldly Entanglements

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Some say Christians should be spiritually-minded and should not get entangled in worldly affairs. Are Christians not to join the military, not vote, hold office, become policemen, or judges because it would entangle them in worldly affairs? Are Christians not allowed to protect themselves and their families from the oppression of evil leaders because it would be considered worldliness?

Did Pastor Jonas Clark and Christian men he led from his church onto Lexington Green to oppose a tyrannical king forfeit their spirituality because they refused to allow themselves to be enslaved? If Christians don't make a stand for righteousness, who will? If they don't resist evil, who will? What would unbelievers think of Christians who dropped the struggle for freedom entirely on their shoulders?

*"America is perishing for the need of preachers who apply God's holy Word to every area of life including personal, civil, and religious liberty. The Church needs more pastors like Jonas Clark, a preacher who taught the great doctrines of salvation in Christ alone and the Biblical right to resistance, which gave his congregation courage to stand in the face of great odds. The Battle of Lexington should inspire every man, in all stations of life, to stand and make a difference."* Rev. Christopher Hoops, Roseville, California, *The Battle of Lexington, Theology Editor, Nordskog Publishing*

## Too Political

Pastors are often criticized for being too political if they speak out about current issues, especially if they are critical of policies or people involved in government. Shouldn't pastors be free to condemn evil where ever evil exists? When did pulpits denouncing corrupt or oppressive leadership become improper? Why is it OK for pastors to condemn immorality, abuse, and wrongdoing in business, society, entertainment, education, religion, and the media, but not condemn it in politics? Why should that be off limits? Are pastors not speak out and ignore the atrocious and deplorable evil government stealthily stripping away the people's rights because pastors are afraid someone may be offended?

Was Elijah being too political when he confronted King Ahab and Jezebel? Was John the Baptist, being too political when he denounced King Herod for his incestuous marriage, **Matt. 14:3-4**?

E-mail from Dr. Robby Dean, dated 7-15-10:

*"Whenever issues relate to moral issues, it is the role of the pastors as leaders, to speak to those issues from the pulpit and to challenge our political leaders to do the right thing. This has been the tradition of this nation since colonial times, and if it were not for the courage and leadership of the pastors in 1775 we would still be bowing to British royalty. The British feared no group more than the pastors in the colonies."*

## Separation of Church and State

The principle of separation of Church and State has become so twisted and perverted that few truly understand it today. Many mistakenly believe it means that Christians must keep their "religion" inside their church and not criticize or interfere with the affairs of State.

The history of our country demonstrates that pastors were very involved in praising or denouncing the policies and leaders of state. They were called "the Black Regiment" because of the long black robes that many of them wore.

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;. . ."* The 1<sup>st</sup> article in the Bill of Rights of the United States of America

The Bill of Rights limits the State, not the church. The State is prohibited from establishing a particular religion or denomination of the Christian faith to be the official religion. There have been periods in history when the Catholic Church assumed the power of the State which certainly is not biblical. We are to follow **Mark 12:17 . . . Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God, the things that are God's.**

The history of our country demonstrates that pastors were very involved in praising or denouncing the policies and leaders of state. They were called "the Black Regiment" because of the long black robes that many of them wore.

*"Because the 'Black Regiment' understood the Biblical roles of church and state, and the proper Biblical response of the church toward the state, the American republic was born. The clergy of the American Colonies preached freedom from tyranny. The Rev. Samuel West preached that it is just as evil to avoid opposing tyranny as it is to disobey righteous leaders. Citing Romans chapter 13, Rev. West pointed out that civil magistrates are "ministers of God" and therefore draw their authority from God's law. He resounded that when the civil magistrate subverts the authority given by God it is the duty of lesser magistrates to resist them.* ~ Randy Pope ~ [http://lwhf.com/black\\_regiment.html](http://lwhf.com/black_regiment.html)

## **Meekness & Controversy**

**Romans 12:18 . . . If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.**

This does not mean Christians are required to be pacifists or to avoid controversy or conflict at all costs.

*"Many religious persons have a dread of controversy and wish truth to be stated without any reference to those who hold opposite errors. Controversy and a bad spirit are, in their estimation, synonymous terms. And strenuously to oppose what is wrong is considered as contrary to Christian meekness. Those who hold this opinion seem to overlook what every page of the New Testament lays before us. In all the history of our Lord Jesus Christ, we never find Him out of controversy. From the moment He entered on the discharge of His office in the synagogue in Nazareth till He expired on the cross, it was an uninterrupted scene of controversy. Nor did He, with all the heavenly meekness which in Him shone so brightly, treat truth and error without reference to those who held them . . . His censures were not confined to doctrine but included the abettors of false principles themselves. There is a loud call on all Christians to . . . present a firm and unified phalanx of opposition to error under every name – from whatever quarter it may approach."*

*"Fear of Controversy", by Robert Haldane, 1874*

## **Struggle Against Spiritual Forces**

Some may use **Eph. 6** as an excuse not to get involved in the worldly affairs of resisting evil. The idea is that our struggle is against unseen forces and we are not to engage flesh and blood entities.

**Ephesians 6:12-13 . . . For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13) Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to **resist in the evil day**, and having done everything, to stand firm.**

We are involved in a spiritual struggle, but forces of evil we can't see control individuals that we can see. We must stay spiritually strong and not rely on human strength. However, employing spiritual dynamics against evil includes resisting individuals who are perpetrating evil.



*“It is impossible to enslave mentally or socially a Bible-reading people. The principles of the Bible are the groundwork of human freedom.” ~ Horace Greeley ~*

*“A totalitarian government that usurps all authority and power to itself from the family, church and other similar associations, thus overstepping God-given bounds, must be resisted. This seems to be the position of John on the island of Patmos. The Roman Emperor had transgressed his governmental limits when he demanded what is the sole prerogative of God-worship.*

*“Bennett remarks on Revelation that it is - not always true that the Christian should obey the governing authorities.” The Evangelical Theological Society. (1969; 2002). Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, Volume 12 (12:211). The N.T. Doctrine of the State, Quote by Bennette Op. cit. p.31*

*“Our Government is filled with false opinion as to what constitutes legislation and how legislation can or cannot solve human problems. No human problems are ever solved by intrusion upon privacy and freedom. Our Government has a false opinion that they can legislate answers to the problems of life. They cannot. Their purpose is to protect the rights, the privacy, the freedom of the individual, not to destroy it. Yet, their legislation now is destructive.” R.B. Thieme Jr. Notes from 2 Thess. 2:11*

*“Evil has no authority apart from human consent. We are the products of our own decisions. We are constantly assigning authority to evil people who represent the cosmic system. This is how dictators become oppressors of the people. This explains the rise of terror in the French Revolution, as well as the rise of Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler.”*

*R.B. Thieme Jr. Notes on “Authority” point 8d*

People have been lied to and have lived in an environment of brainwashing propaganda for so long that it's hard for them to recognize truth. The purpose of this paper is to give you information to help you be able to think for yourself and make decisions that line up with biblical principles. In pursuit of that end, you have been asked 124 questions to ponder. It is my personal desire that you recognize the truth that has been presented. Why? Because:

**John 8:32 . . . you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**