



# PASTOR SERMON RESOURCES

ADRIAN ROGERS

Christian Citizenship

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# Christian Citizenship

What does the Bible say about Christian citizenship? In a culture in which truth is eroding, what are our responsibilities, duties, and rights? In this message, Adrian Rogers explains how we are to behave concerning politics, using Paul's letter in Romans 13.



# Christian Citizenship

What does the Bible say about Christian citizenship? What are our responsibilities, duties, and rights? What are Christians to do, to think, and how are we instructed to behave?

Many Christian citizens shy away from political involvement for various reasons. Some are discouraged, others are intimidated or annoyed. But Romans 13:1-7 encourages us first to look at the reasons for human government.

The Bible tells us that human government is ordained by God. Daniel 2:21 says, "He [the Lord] removes kings and raises up kings." God ordains human government for two reasons: to restrain evil and to reward good.

Romans 13 also outlines the requirements for human government. And in Matthew 22, Jesus tells the people, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

As Christians, our responsibility is, first and foremost, to God; but we do have a responsibility to human government. Adrian Rogers says, "Separation of church and state does not mean the separation of God and government." The government is here to restrain evil. The church is here to preach the Gospel. The state is not the master of the church, and the church is not the master of the state. The church is the conscience of the state. We are here to hold up a standard of truth.

There are six duties Christian citizens have concerning our government.

- 1. Pay our government:** Jesus paid His taxes; we ought to do likewise.
- 2. Pray for our government:** Adrian Rogers says, "The greatest responsibility in America is not in the White House but in the church house."
- 3. Praise our government:** We are to give honor to whom honor is due.
- 4. Preach to our country:** Adrian Rogers says, "We dare not identify the Christian faith with the Democrat or the Republican Party. We need to be free to tell both parties to repent and get right with God."
- 5. Participate in our government:** Christians are to participate, not on the basis of parties, but principles. We are to be informed.
- 6. Persuade our government:** Our hope for America is to change public opinion. The Great Commission remains the same: we are instructed to win souls for Jesus Christ.



# Christian Citizenship

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Romans 13:1-7

## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The book of Romans is the constitution of Christianity and is a solid word for this unsure age.
- b) Today's message deals with the question of Christians and patriotism and what the Bible has to say about Christian citizenship.
  - i) What are our responsibilities, duties and rights?
  - ii) Did God ordain human government and then tell His people to stay out of it?
- c) Many Christians have simply dropped out of human government.
  - i) They see involvement in government as the social gospel.
    - (1) There is only one Gospel, and that is the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (2) Some people have substituted culture for Calvary, and others think that if we get involved in government that all we're trying to do is make the world a better place to go to Hell from.
  - ii) Others have dropped out simply because they have given up hope.
    - (1) They believe America has crossed a point of no return.
  - iii) Still others have dropped out because they see politics as dirty and something that would defile them.
    - (1) They believe that we as Christians are to be other-worldly; that our kingdom is not of this world and that we don't want to get contaminated with politics.
  - iv) Many have dropped out and don't participate in government because they are intimidated.
    - (1) The ACLU and others have prated so much about the separation of church and state that they think we as Christians somehow have no rights, privileges or prerogatives.
- d) Where can we find answers to the questions of the Christian's role in government?
  - i) Will we find the answers from self-serving politicians who want to co-opt the church and use the church for their purposes?
  - ii) Do the politicians know the answer, and will they tell us what is right or what is wrong?
  - iii) Will we get the answers from humanists and secularists who don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, don't believe in God and don't believe in the church?
  - iv) Will we get the answers from philosophers?
  - v) The only place where we will find the answers is in the Word of God.
    - (1) The book of Romans speaks very clearly and plainly about the matter of Christians citizenship.



- e) Romans 13:1-7
  - i) The word “powers” in verse one means “authorities.”
    - (1) It is literally talking about the civil magistrate, the governmental leader.
- f) The big question is not can we be Christians and be involved in government, but rather can we be Christians and not be involved.
  - i) Can we obey the Word of God and not be involved?

## 2) THE REASONS FOR HUMAN GOVERNMENT

- a) The Bible tells us that human government is ordained of God.
  - i) God sets up kings, and God brings kings down.
    - (1) God ordains rulers, and sometimes God sets up wicked rulers.
    - (2) Daniel 2:21
  - ii) One of the mightiest rulers in the Old Testament was King Nebuchadnezzar.
    - (1) He ruled over ancient Babylon.
    - (2) Daniel was in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel prophesied and testified to Nebuchadnezzar and told him where his power came from.
    - (3) Daniel 2:37
    - (4) Nebuchadnezzar was not a godly king, and God set him up and also brought him down.
  - iii) In the Old Testament, Pharaoh was wicked, anti-God and a murderer of little babies.
    - (1) He came into his kingdom because God raised him up.
      - (a) Romans 9:17
  - iv) In the New Testament, Pilate didn't have the courage to release Jesus.
    - (1) John 19:11
      - (a) Even Pilate, who allowed Jesus to be crucified, did not have any power except it was given to him from above.
  - v) When the apostle Paul wrote this chapter of the book of Romans, Caesar and the Roman government were in power.
    - (1) This was not a democracy; Christians were disenfranchised and had no political power.
    - (2) In fact, what Christians believed was considered illegal because they would not say that Caesar is Lord.
    - (3) It was at this time that Paul wrote that the powers that be are ordained of God.
      - (a) Romans 13:1
  - vi) The Bible says that if we resist these powers, then we are resisting God because it is God who set them up.
    - (1) Romans 13:2
- b) God ordains human government for two reasons:
  - i) To restrain evil.
    - (1) Romans 13:3-4
    - (2) We cannot legislate morality; there is no law on Earth to make us moral.
      - (a) Laws cannot make us good; only God can make us good.
      - (b) Government is not here to make us good.



- (3) Since we cannot legislate morality, we must legislate against immorality.
  - (a) There's no law that can make someone honest, so we have to have laws to keep someone from stealing.
- (4) We should thank God for those who are here to restrain evil.
  - (a) Police officers are here to restrain evil.
- (5) Romans 13:4
  - (a) The sword is an instrument of death.
  - (b) Sometimes, in order to restrain evil, the government must take life.
    - (i) Exodus 20:13
      - 1. The Hebrew translation of this passage states, "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt take no personal vengeance."
    - (ii) Exodus 21:12
      - 1. The author of Exodus 20:13 also wrote this passage in Exodus 21.
    - (iii) Genesis 9:6
      - 1. All murder is killing, but not all killing is murder.
      - 2. The civil magistrates are God's ordained ministers to do this work.
    - (iv) God is infinite love.
      - 1. The coddling of the murderer is cruelty to the community.
  - (c) Some say that God is too good to punish sin when, in fact, God is too good not to punish sin.
    - (i) The cross of Calvary was capital punishment.
      - 1. The Roman soldiers were only instruments that nailed the Lord Jesus to the cross.
      - 2. The Jewish council were the ones who hounded the Lord Jesus to the cross.
      - 3. God the Son died at the hands of God the Father.
        - a. God the Father poured out His wrath upon His only Son.
        - b. God's Son was standing in our place; Jesus was our substitute.
        - c. Jesus took the death that we should have died.
          - i. Romans 6:23
  - (d) Exodus 22:2-3
    - (i) According to this Scripture, we have a right to protect our loved ones.
- (6) There are times when a nation has to stand up.
  - (a) There are times when we as individuals must stand up to protect our children and those we love.
  - (b) Was it wrong to stand against Hitler?
  - (c) Was it wrong to stand against Stalin?
  - (d) Was it wrong to stand against Saddam Hussein?
  - (e) To believe in a police force is to also believe in an army.
    - (i) In fact, a police force is a type of army.
- ii) To reward good.
  - (1) Romans 13:3



- (2) The framers of the American Constitution were soaked in the Word of God, and they wrote that we are to promote the general welfare and to provide the common defense.
  - (a) They did not say to “provide” the general welfare, but to promote it.
  - (b) This idea comes out of the Scripture we’re dealing with today.

### 3) THE REQUIREMENTS FOR HUMAN GOVERNMENT (ROMANS 13:5-6)

- a) We have responsibilities to God that override any other responsibility, and we have a responsibility to human government.
- b) Matthew 22:15-21
  - i) This is a key passage as we understand our responsibility as Christian citizens and as Christian brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (1) The framers of our Constitution understood this, too.
      - (a) The phrase “separation of church and state” is not found in the Constitution.
  - ii) This Scripture does not mean the separation of God and government.
    - (1) Our Founding Fathers did not believe in the separation of God and government.
      - (a) In the Declaration of Independence, they wrote that our rights come from God, not from government.
  - iii) Our Constitution states that Congress shall make no laws establishing a religion, which means that we do not want a state-mandated, state-supported church.
    - (1) At the time the Constitution was written, the British were Anglicans, the Germans were Lutherans and the French were Catholics.
    - (2) The constitution provides for a free church in a free state.
      - (a) We desire the government to be free to do what it can do so that the church can be free to do what it alone can do.
        - (i) The government is here to restrain evil.
        - (ii) The church is here to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (3) The state is not the master of the church, and the church is not the master of the state.
      - (a) The church is the conscience of the state.
        - (i) We are to hold up a standard.
- c) As Christians, we have six duties concerning our government.
  - i) We have to pay for our government.
    - (1) Romans 13:6-7
      - (a) “Tribute” is similar to our income tax.
      - (b) “Custom” would be like our sales tax.
    - (2) The Lord Jesus paid His taxes, and we should pay our taxes.
      - (a) Matthew 17:27
    - (3) Ever-increasing taxes are a burden, and excessive taxes are sinful and dangerous.
      - (a) A government is on its last leg when half of the people get the idea they don’t have to work because the other half will take care of them, and the other half get the idea it does no good to work because somebody else gets what they work for.
  - ii) We are to pray for our government.
    - (1) 1 Timothy 2:1-3



- (2) We should pray for our leaders, especially for wicked leaders.
  - (a) God can change a ruler, He can remove a ruler, and He can overrule a ruler.
    - (i) Proverbs 21:1
- (3) The greatest responsibility in America is not in the White House but in the church house.
- iii) We are to praise our government.
  - (1) Romans 13:7
  - (2) 1 Peter 2:17
  - (3) Patriotism is not bad; there is nothing wrong with patriotism.
    - (a) When our government is good, we can praise our government.
    - (b) It doesn't mean that we love other nations less when we love America specially.
    - (c) This is our native land.
      - (i) We love our own families in a way that we don't love other families.
      - (ii) Psalm 137:5
- iv) We are to preach to our government.
  - (1) We are to praise our country when it does right, and we are to preach to our country when it does wrong.
    - (a) God's people dare not be silent.
  - (2) We dare not identify the Christian faith with the Democrat or the Republican party.
    - (a) We need to be free to tell both parties to repent and get right with God.
  - (3) We should be civil, but we should not be silent.
    - (a) Nathan warned David.
    - (b) Elijah preached to Ahab.
    - (c) Eleazar warned Jehoshaphat.
    - (d) Daniel preached to Nebuchadnezzar.
    - (e) Moses warned Pharaoh.
    - (f) John the Baptist preached to Herod.
    - (g) We must say to our government that what is morally wrong is not politically right.
- v) We are to participate in our government.
  - (1) Romans 13:7
  - (2) Matthew 22:20-21
    - (a) Our greatest and highest allegiance is to God.
    - (b) We do not have a Caesar as they did in Bible times; our government is of the people, by the people and for the people.
      - (i) If we do not participate in our government, then we have not rendered to our Caesar the things that belong to our Caesar.
      - (ii) If we do not inform ourselves and vote, then we have disobeyed the Lord Jesus.
  - (3) It is inconceivable that God would have ordained human government and then tell His people to stay out of it.
    - (a) If we Christians do not participate in our government, then whom does that leave to run it?
  - (4) We as Christians are to participate, not on the basis of parties or persons or politics, but on principles.





- (5) We are to be informed.
- vi) We are to persuade our government.
  - (1) Our government is a republic; a representative rule by law.
  - (2) All America is based on public opinion.
    - (a) Our only hope for America is to change public opinion, and the only thing that can change public opinion is the Word of God.
  - (3) We will not out-argue people.
    - (a) They are blinded and do not see.
    - (b) They need Jesus.
  - (4) We are to persuade our people and win souls to the Lord Jesus.

#### 4) CONCLUSION

- a) In ancient Rome, the Coliseum would seat 50,000 people according to modern estimates.
  - i) They would put the Christians in the Coliseum and make them fight against gladiators and lions for entertainment.
  - ii) Underneath the Coliseum in the catacombs, the Christians huddled together and worshipped.
    - (1) These people underground were the ones who said, "Jesus is Lord, not Caesar."
    - (2) And these were the ones who brought the whole thing in the Coliseum crashing down.
      - (a) That's where the power is.
- b) It is not political influence that we need but the power of God.
  - i) When we change America, we'll change the politics.
- c) Whether America survives or not, there is another Kingdom and another King; His name is Jesus.
  - i) We need to render unto God the things that are God's.
  - ii) Your life belongs to God, and you can give it to Him right now.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



# Christian Citizenship

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Romans 13:1-7

Would you be finding Romans chapter 13 in the Word of God? The book of Romans is the constitution of Christianity, and I want to tell you, it is a solid word for an unsure age. And our age, without the Word of God, is an unsure age. And I'm speaking to many people. You're looking for something solid, you're looking for a place to stand, and yet you feel like you're walking around on eggshells and Jell-O. Thank God for the solid rock of God's Word.

And today we're dealing with something, a question of Christians and patriotism and I want you to see what the Bible has to say about Christian citizenship. What are our responsibilities, our duties, our rights? Is the Bible oblivious to this? Or did God ordain human government and tell His people to stay out of it? What are Christians to do, to think, and how are we going to behave?

Now I'm the first to confess that many Christians have simply dropped out, and let me tell you the reasons that many have dropped out. We're going to read the Scripture now in just a moment. But let me tell you why many have dropped out. They see involvement as somehow as the social gospel. And I'm against the social gospel as much as anybody else because there's only one Gospel and that's the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ, the blood Gospel where Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures; but there's some who have substituted culture for Calvary. And, and others think that if we get all involved in government, that all we're trying to do is make the world a better place to go to Hell from. And, so they just simply drop out because they think, "Well, we're not to get involved in the social gospel."

Now there're other people who have dropped out just simply because they have given up hope. They say that America has crossed the point of no return. And so what they've done, they've just hunkered down and they have begun to sing the song, "Hold the Fort," and they're just waiting for Jesus to get here and to rescue them, and so they've just given up hope.

Now there are others who have dropped out because, not that they equate activity with the social gospel or not because they are hopeless, but because they see politics as dirty; something that would defile them, that we as Christians are to be other-worldly, that our kingdom is not of this world, and so therefore we don't want to get contaminated, so we will just stay away from all of that, and some folks really believe that.

And then there're others, and a great number like this, who have dropped out and don't participate, very frankly, because they are intimidated. They are intimidated. The ACLU and others have, have prated so much about this thing called church and state and the separation of church and state, that they think because we are Christians, somehow we have no rights, no privileges, no prerogatives,



that we have been disenfranchised, and they just tell us, “Why don’t you shut up and go back inside your little stained-glass prisons, and leave it to us to take care of it.” Now, very frankly, a lot of people who are believers have more or less dropped out.

Now where are we going to get the answers? I mean, how are we going to know the answers to these questions? Are we going to get the answers to self-serving politicians? Not all politicians are self-serving, but are we going to let some self-serving politician try to co-opt the church and use the church for his or her purposes? Or perhaps intimidate the church so that he or she can have his or her way? Are the politicians going to tell us what is right or what is wrong? Do they know the answer? Where’re we going to get the answers? Are we going to get the answers from the humanists and the secularists who don’t believe in Christ, don’t believe in God, don’t believe in the church? Are we going to get the answers from some egg-headed philosopher who’s going to sit back and bump his fingers and tell us what he thinks? I’m going to tell you where we’re going to get the answers. Right here, right here! The Word of God and the book of Romans is going to speak very clearly and very plainly about this matter of Christian citizenship.

Begin now in chapter 13 verse 1 on through verse 7, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.” Now the word powers there is the word that is a translation of the word that means authorities, and when he’s saying, “Higher powers,” what he is literally talking about is the civil magistrate, the governmental leader. Let every soul be subject unto the civil magistrate. “For there is no power,” that is no authority, “but of God, and the powers that be,” that is the rulers, the leaders, the magistrates that be, “are ordained of God.” Now you might think of your minister as an ordained minister, but have you ever thought of your governor as an ordained governor? “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power,” that is the authorities, “resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist,” that is, rebellers, “shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power of the civil magistrate. Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same,” that is, of your governor, your ruler, your king, your president, your mayor, your council. “For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain. For he is,” who is he talking about now? The civil magistrate, “for he 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 they are God’s ministers 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; honor to whom honor.”

Now that’s the Scripture we’re going to look at today, and we’re going to look at it basically under three headings. And the very first heading that we’re going to look at today is, from the Word of God, is **the reasons for human government**. And you’re going to find when we get to the bottom line, the big question is not; can you be a Christian and be involved in government? The big question is; can you be a Christian and not be involved? And not be involved. Can you obey this Word of God and not be involved?

Now, what are the reasons for human government? The Bible tells us that human government is **ordained of God**. Did you know that God sets up kings and God brings kings down? That God ordains rulers and sometimes God sets up wicked rulers? God does that. Let me give you some examples, and



I want you to jot this down, now, and I want you to get these Scriptures so you can take them home and study them. You may not be able to turn to them as fast as I give them to you, so you might want to jot them down. For example, in Daniel chapter 2 and verse 21, Daniel said, concerning the Lord, "He removeth kings and setteth up kings." God takes them down and God puts them up. That's what the Word of God says, "He removeth kings and setteth up kings."

Now I'll give you a prime example of that. One of the mightiest potentates in the Old Testament was a king named Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar ruled over ancient Babylon, and Daniel was in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel had a chance to prophesy and testify to Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar where his power came from. In Daniel chapter 2 and verse 37 God said through Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom." That's Nebuchadnezzar, and he was not a godly king. As a matter of fact, he got so rotten full of himself, he got so full of pride, that God judged him, and he ended up crawling around on all fours eating grass like an ox with long fingernails. This man was so stuffed full of himself, God set him up and God brought him down. That's Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.

Let me give you another king. Who do we think of as the arch villain so much in the Old Testament? Old Pharaoh. Well how did Pharaoh get his kingdom? Well, God raised Pharaoh up. Pharaoh was wicked, malevolent, anti-God, a murderer of little babies, but now listen to this, Romans 9 verse 17, "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, 'Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee.'" God said, "I brought you up, and I'm going to bring you down. I'm going to show My power in you, old Pharaoh."

Remember that politician, Pilate, who didn't have the moral rectitude and courage to release Jesus? He washed his lily-white politician's hands and said, "I'm innocent of the blood of this just man." But it was Pilate that had Jesus Christ in front of him and Pilate said to Jesus, "Don't You know who I am? Don't You know that I have the power to crucify You or to release You?" Now let me give you the answer that Jesus gave to Pilate. In John chapter 19 and verse 11, "Jesus said to him, 'Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were given thee from above.'" Even Pilate, even Pilate, who allowed Jesus to be crucified; Jesus said, "You don't have any authority; you don't have any power, except it was given to you from above."

Now that's a very interesting thing because of the three illustrations I've given you now, all three of these were wicked men, and yet God allowed them to have power. Romans 13:1, "The authorities that be are ordained of God." Who was the authority when Paul wrote this? Old Caesar; the Roman government was in power. That was not a democracy. The Christians were disenfranchised. They had no political power. As a matter of fact, what they believed was illegal because they would not say, "Caesar is Lord," and yet, under that aegis the apostle wrote, "The powers that be are ordained of God."

And so, the Bible says if you resist these authorities, in verse 2, you're resisting God, because it is God that set them up. Well, I know what you're thinking right now, you're saying, "Wait a minute. Do you mean that some king, some potentate, some fat toad sitting upon a throne may tell me to do this or that and I am to do it; contrary to the Word and the will of God?" Well, hold on to that thought and we'll get to that thought later on in the third point of this message.



But now listen to me, listen to me. I want you to get this point down in your heart and in your mind, that God ordains human government for two reasons, he tells us right here. Number one; **to restrain evil**. Look if you will in verses 3 and 4 of Romans chapter 13, look at it. He says here, “Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good and thou shalt have the praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain.” Reason number one that God has given us human government is for restraint, to restrain evil.

Let me ask you a question. Have you ever heard this; “You can’t legislate morality?” How many of you ever heard that? If you haven’t heard it, you’ve been asleep for fifty years. “You can’t legislate morality.” That is absolutely true. You can’t legislate morality. There is not a law on earth that can make you moral. That’s the reason we have to have laws that legislate against immorality. Now listen, you can’t legislate morality. Law can’t make you good, only God can make you good. Government is not here to make you good. It can’t make you good, only God can make you good. Government is here to restrain evil. There’s not a law on earth can make you love me. So I have to have one to keep you from killing me. See? You don’t legislate morality, you legislate against immorality. There’s not a law on earth that can make you honest, so we have to have laws that keep you from stealing. There’s not a law on earth that can keep you from lying, so we have to have laws against perjury. You see, you don’t legislate morality, but you do legislate against immorality, and thank God for those who are here to restrain evil.

And I want to say something else. It’s about time we said a good word for the policemen. I’m sick and tired of policemen being put upon. I took this out of my files and I want you to listen to it, “A policeman is many things. He is a son, a brother, a father, an uncle, and sometimes even a grandfather. He is a protector in time of need and a comforter in time of sorrow. His job calls for him to be a diplomat, a psychologist, a lawyer, a friend, and an inspiration. He suffers from an overdose of publicity about brutality and dishonesty. He suffers far more from the notoriety produced by unfounded charges. Too often, acts of heroism go unnoticed and the truth is buried under all the criticism. The fact is,” listen to this, “less than one-half of one percent of policemen ever discredit their uniform. That’s a better average than you’ll find among clergymen. A policeman is an ordinary guy who is called upon for extraordinary bravery for us. His job may sometime seem routine, but the interruptions can be moments of stark terror. He is the man who faces a half-crazed gunman, who rescues a lost child, who challenges a mob, and risks his neck more than we realize. He deserves our respect and profound thanks. A policeman stands between the law abider and the law breaker. He is the prime reason your home hasn’t been burned, your family abused, and your business looted. Try to imagine what would happen if there were no policemen around. And then try to think of ways to make their job more rewarding. Show them the respect you really have. Offer them a smile and a kind word. See that they don’t have to be magicians to raise their families on less than adequate salaries. We think policemen are great. We thank God for all the little boys who said they would be policemen and who kept their promise. We hope you feel the same way. And we hope you will show it so there will always be enough good policemen to go around.”

“He is the minister of God to thee for good.” He is there to restrain evil. And the Bible says that, “He bears the sword.” A sword is an instrument of death. Sometimes the government, in order to restrain



evil, must take life. Now I want you to listen to me, friend. Exodus chapter 20 and verse 13 says, "Thou shalt not kill." This Scripture in the Ten Commandments means, and the Hebrew translation bears it out, that, "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt take no personal vengeance." But friend, the same person who wrote Exodus chapter 20 and verse 13 wrote Exodus chapter 21 and verse 12. Whoever else he was, he wasn't insane, a madman, and what did he say in Exodus 21 verse 12? "He that smiteth a man so that he die shall surely be put to death." The same Bible, the same Bible, chapter next to chapter. One chapter says, "Thou shalt not kill," that is, "Don't do murder," and the next chapter says, "If you do, you ought to be put to death." That's what it says.

Now why is this? Well, the Bible said way back in Genesis chapter 9 and verse 6, listen to it, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." All murder is killing, but all killing is not murder. All murder is killing, but all killing is not murder. Again, listen to it, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. For he," that is man, "in the image of God made He man." The God that gives life is the God that has the right to take it and God has His ordained ministers to do His work for Him, and that is the civil magistrate.

Somebody says, "That is cruel, Pastor Rogers. I thought you were a man of love." Friend, you may not believe what I'm saying is based on love, but I don't want to be any more loving than Almighty God, and God is infinite love. And I'm giving you the Word of God; and if you don't believe Genesis 9:6, when you get to Heaven, if you get to Heaven, take it up with God, okay? God is love. You see, the coddling of the murderer is really cruelty to the community. Don't think that you're more wise or loving than God Himself.

There're people that say, "Well, capital punishment, that's not an inhibition to murder." Well, in some cases it is. I want to tell you that, that Henry the Eighth pardoned a murderer one time and that murderer, after having been pardoned, killed another man. They came back to Henry the Eighth and they said to, to King Henry, "Pardon him again." He said, "Oh, no." He said, "He killed the first man; I killed the second man. He won't kill anymore," and the man died for his crime. You see, it does inhibit some from killing again.

Some say, "Well, God is too good to punish sin." No, God is too good not to punish sin. Now if you don't believe that God believes in capital punishment, I want to ask you this question; who crucified Jesus? Well, you say, "The Roman soldiers." Well, they were the instruments that nailed Him to the cross. You say, "Well, the Jewish council." Yes, they were the ones that hounded Him to the cross. But if you'll study your Bible carefully, you'll understand that God the Son died at the hands of God the Father. Isaiah 53 verse 10, "He hath put Him to death," that's what the Bible says. God the Father poured out His wrath upon His only Son. Why? Because God's Son was standing in our place. Jesus was my substitute. He took my place. And therefore He took the death that I should die, and the Bible says in Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." And the cross was capital punishment. That's what it was, at the hands, really, of Almighty God.

No, none of us should rejoice when anybody dies, but you know there're people who are pacifists. They don't believe, for example, that a nation ever ought to go to war. Well, I suppose these people don't believe, therefore, that we should defend our loved ones. Put this Scripture down. We're talking



about bearing the sword now. Exodus chapter 22; now remember, in Exodus 20 He says, "Don't kill." In Exodus chapter 21, He says, "Now if a man kill a man, that man should be put to death." In Exodus chapter 22, here's what He says, "If you're in the middle of your home and somebody is coming in, it's pitch black, you don't know what he has in mind, whether it's rape, murder, pillage, you don't know." Exodus chapter 22 verses 2 and 3, "If a thief be found breaking up," that is, he's breaking in, that's what that literally means, "and he be smitten that he die," that is, he's coming in the window, you hit him, and he dies, "there shall no blood be shed for him." That is, you're not going to be put to death for that. "If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him." Now what does that mean? Well, if it's daylight and you see what's happening and you kill him unnecessarily, then you have become a murderer yourself. "For he should make full restitution. If he had nothing, then shall he be sold for his theft." That is, if a man just comes in, it's daylight, you see him hauling off your television, he ought to make restitution. And by the way, that ought to be in the law today, too, that he ought to make restitution. But what God is saying is this, "That you have a right to protect your loved ones, you have a right to protect your children."

Let me ask you a question. Would you not protect, if you're walking down the street, and you saw a man abusing a little child, would you step in or would you just walk on by? Let me ask you another question. If somebody comes to rape your daughter or your wife, I want to ask the men in this congregation this question, would you just stand around? Would you say, "Well, peace, brother. I'm a godly man. I have been called to love. I am a godly man." No, no, no, no, no! Listen, friend, the Bible teaches that there're times even when nations have to stand up, even as we do as individuals. For example, was it wrong to stand against Hitler, who murdered his millions? Was it wrong to stand against Stalin? Was it wrong to stand against Saddam Hussein, who gouged out thousands of eyes, whose armies were raping and looting, and who was concocting poisoned gas to put on his missiles? Is that wrong to oppose people like that? Is it wrong to stand against this kind of wickedness?

You see, if you believe in a police force, you certainly believe in an army. Did you know that New York City has a bigger police force than some countries have armies? A police force is just simply an army. Did you know that when a police force goes on a drug raid, that's just a small war. We're not talking about kind, now. We're talking about degree.

What, what am I saying? What am I saying is this, that one reason that God has given government is to restrain evil. That's the whole thing. "He beareth not the sword in vain for wrath." That's one reason we have government.

Number one; to restrain evil. Number two; to reward good, **to reward good**. Look at this Scripture again, go back at it again. It says here in Romans 13 verse 3, "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same." And so, our Constitution, and by the way, the framers of the American Constitution were soaked in the Word of God. They wrote in there that we are to, "Promote the general welfare." Didn't say provide the general welfare! "Promote the general welfare, provide the common defense." You see how wise they were? Where did they get that? Right out of this Scripture that we're dealing with today. I'm telling you, they were soaked in the Word of God. Thank God for our Constitution and the way that God has given it.



Now, that is the reason for human government. Now, let's talk secondly about **the requirements for human government, Christian citizenship**. What are our rights and what are our responsibilities? Notice Romans 13 verses 5 and 6, "Therefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay you tribute also, for they are God's ministers attending continually upon this very thing." Now, we have rights and we have responsibilities. We have responsibilities to God that override any other responsibility, but we do have a responsibility to human government.

In Matthew chapter 22 verses 15 to 21, they came to Jesus and they tried to catch Jesus in a catch-22, and they said, "Jesus, tell us, we know that You're no respecter of persons. Is it right to pay tribute to Caesar?" And He said, "Bring me a coin." And He held it up and He said, "Whose picture is that? Whose inscription is that?" They said, "That's Caesar's." And Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." That's a very, very key passage, as we understand our responsibility as Christian citizens and as Christian brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, the framers of our Constitution knew this also. Now, some people think that the phrase, "Separation of church and state" is found in the Constitution. I'll give you a trip to Hawaii in any hotel you want, if you find that in the Constitution and come show me. It's not in the Constitution. It is a good principle rightly understood. It is not in the Constitution. It is based in the First Amendment to the constitution. Rightly interpreted, this is what it says, "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion." Now listen, that's one side of the coin, "or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." That's exactly what Jesus was saying, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."

Now this does not mean the separation of God and government. Our Founding Fathers did not believe that. As a matter of fact, when they wrote that Declaration of Independence they said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." The rights did not come from the government, but from God. And so therefore in America we put, "In God We Trust" on our money. Congress begins with prayer. Little boys and girls in school can't do it, but the big Congressman can. Congress convenes in prayer. We salute the flag, and we say, "One nation under God, indivisible." Why? Because historically we've known, as our Constitution was written, soaked in the Word of God that you don't separate God and government. Abraham Lincoln said, "I believe it is the duty of nations as well as men, the duty of nations as well as men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God."

Now what the Constitution says when it says that, "Congress shall make no laws establishing a religion," that meant that we don't want a state-mandated, a state-supported church. When this was written, the British were Anglicans, the Germans were Lutherans, and the French were Catholics and we don't want a state church. Friend, I'd be as much afraid of a Baptist Pope as any other kind. We don't want a state church. What we want is a free church in a free state. We want the government to be free to do what it can do so the church can do what it is free alone to do, and what can the government do? It's here to restrain evil. What is the church here to do? It's to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And listen, my dear friend, the state is not the master of the church, and the church is not the servant of the state, or the master of the state, it is the conscience of the state. That's what we're here to do. We're here to hold up a standard, which is a standard of, of truth.





Now, ungodly people have always wanted to separate God and government. Let me tell you **six duties that you have as a Christian**, six duties that you have as a Christian. What are you to do concerning your government? Number one, I hate to tell you this, but I'm going to put it first; **you've got to pay for your government**. You've got to pay for your government. Look if you will in Romans 13 verses 6 and 7, "For this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are God's ministers." And then he goes down in verse 7, he says, "Tribute to whom tribute is due," that would be like income tax, "custom to whom custom," just like the receipt of customs, that's like a sales tax. You've got to pay it.

Jesus paid His taxes; you ought to pay your taxes. As a matter of fact, there's a wonderful story we all remember in Matthew 27 verse 17, Jesus, when it was time to pay His taxes, He told Peter, "You go cast a hook in the sea and you take the first fish that comes up and look in his mouth, you'll find a coin in your mouth," and Jesus said this, said, "I'm doing this, not be, I'm a citizen of another world but," He said, "I'm doing this lest I should offend." Now, ever-increasing taxes are a burden, and a government is on its last legs, in my estimation when half the people get the idea they don't have to work because the other half will take care of them and the other half gets the idea it does no good to work because somebody else gets what they work for. And excessive taxes are sinful and dangerous. A Frenchman said that, "France fell when people got the idea that the government was a cow to be milked rather than a watchdog to be fed." But we are to pay for our government.

Number two, not only are we to pay for our government, **we're to pray for our government**. Put this Scripture down, First Timothy 2 verses 1 through 3, "I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." You say, "Well, should I pray for my leader if he's wicked?" You ought to pray all the more for him. You ought to pray all the more for him. Why? Because God can change a ruler, God can remove a ruler, and God can overrule a ruler. Listen, the Bible says in Proverbs 21 verse 1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water. He turneth it whithersoever He will."

The greatest responsibility in America is not in the White House but in the church house. We're to pray for our government. Pray for those who are in authority. One Christian was praying for government and a crooked politician said to him, "Well, I'm glad you're praying for those who are in authority." He said, "Well, that's not the verse I'm using. I'm using the verse that says, 'Pray for those who persecute you.'" But whatever it is, we are to pray for them.

Now, number three, **we are to praise our government**. Patriotism is not bad. When our government is good, praise our government. This Scripture says, "Give honor to whom honor is due." First Peter 2 verse 17 says, "Honor the king." There's nothing wrong with patriotism. There are those who don't want us to wave a flag. There are those who don't want us to love America. Why not? That doesn't mean that I love other nations less when I love America specially. It's just means that this is my native land. I love my family in a way I don't love your family. They are my family! The Psalmist said, "Oh, Jerusalem, if I forget thee, let my right hand lose her cunning." Patriotism, love of the fatherland, is not wrong. We are to give honor to whom honor is due.



And then next, **we are to preach to our country.** We're to praise our country when it does right; we're to preach to our country when it does wrong. God's people dare not be silent. I'm going to tell you something. We dare not identify the Christian faith with the Democrat or the Republican Party. We need to be free to tell both parties to repent and get right with God.

We will be civil, but we won't be silent. Nathan warned David. Elijah preached to Ahab. Eleazar warned Jehoshaphat. Daniel preached to Nebuchadnezzar. Moses warned Pharaoh. John the Baptist preached to Herod. And I have an announcement to make. As long as they're killing babies and practicing infanticide, I will not be silent. As long as we have a government that's trying to normalize sexual perversion I will not be silent. As long as they're handing out condoms to high school and junior high school students in so-called, "God-blessed America," I will not be silent. And as long as a free-born American is told that he cannot pray out loud anywhere, I will not be silent. We must preach to our government. And we must say to our government, "Whatever is morally wrong is not politically right!"

We pay for our government; we pray for our government; we praise our government; we preach to our government; and **we participate in our government.** Notice again in Romans 13 verse 7. We're to render all their due, custom to whom custom and so forth. Jesus said, "Give to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar." And Jesus said, "Render to God the things that belong to God." To God is our highest, greatest allegiance. But we don't have a Caesar as they did then, so when you read a Scripture, you ask yourself this question; "What did it mean then? How does it apply now? And then how does it apply to me personally? What is our Caesar? What is our government?"

Our government is, "A government of the people, by the people, and for the people." And I'm telling you, friend, if you do not participate in your government, you have not rendered to your Caesar the things that belong to your Caesar. If, for example, you do not vote, if you do not inform yourself, in my estimation, you have disobeyed the Lord Jesus Christ. It is inconceivable that God would've ordained human government and told His people to stay out of it. If that is true, who does that leave to run it? Use your head. We as Christians are to participate, not on the basis of parties or persons or politics or policies but principles. We are to be informed.

You say, "Pastor, this is a church. Why don't you talk about something biblical?" That's what I am doing. You render to Caesar that which is Caesar's. My friend, you get involved.

Last of all, we are to persuade our government. But **we're to persuade our government.** Our government is a democracy; more literally it is a republic, a representative rule by law. But all America is based on public opinion. May I tell you, the only hope for America is to change public opinion? Do you know the only thing that can change public opinion? The Word of God. We've got to get the Bible out. Friend, we're not going to out-argue these people. They're blind, they don't see it, and they're selfish and full of greed! They've got to know Jesus Christ. We're supposed to persuade our people. We're to be taking them back one at a time and winning souls to Jesus Christ.

I've been to Rome. The Coliseum would seat fifty thousand people. They would put the Christians in the Coliseum and make them fight with gladiators and redden the mouths of lions with their blood, and it was for entertainment. The Caesars were up there looking down upon those people in that Coliseum, but underneath that Coliseum were the catacombs, subterranean tunnels, and there the



Christians would meet to worship, huddled together. I want to tell you something, friend. Those people underground, who said, "Jesus is Lord, not Caesar," they were the one who brought that whole thing in the Coliseum crashing down. That's where the power is. That's where the power is. It's not political influence that we need. It is the power of God that we need. And we change America, we'll change the politics. Amen? Amen and Amen.

Let's pray together. Would you pray for America right now? And remember when you're praying for America, you're praying for you, friend. Oh, God, God, God, bless America. Lord, we deserve judgment, but we need mercy. Bring this nation, Lord, back to You. Lord, it's beyond us. But God, we need You in America.

Now while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, if you've never given your heart to Jesus Christ, friend, you need Jesus. Whether America survives or not, there is another Kingdom and another King. His name is Jesus. And you need to render unto God the things that are God's, and your life belongs to God, and I want you to give it to Him right now. Jesus died for you on the cross. As I said, He bore that capital punishment in your place. And if you will receive Him as your Lord and Savior, you'll be saved today. Would you pray a prayer like this? "Dear God," just pray it, "dear God, dear God," speak to Him, "I'm a sinner, Lord, I'm lost. My sin deserves judgment but I need mercy. I want to be saved. Jesus, Jesus, thank You for dying on that cross for me. Thank You for paying for my sin with Your blood on the cross. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Forgive my sin. Save me, Jesus." Pray that prayer from your heart. "Save me, Lord Jesus." Did you pray it? Then pray this, "Lord Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray, Amen."

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