

## **A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME**

### **GOD'S WORD CONCERNING CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP – PART I**

Romans 13:1-2 “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.”

Government and politics are said to be deeply personal. Indeed, this is often true although there are many who freely share their opinions regarding this topic. When some speak one would think God only favors Republicans and others believe He approves only Democrats. Neither of course is true. At least after a careful search of the Bible no such teaching is apparent.

Some say there are certain topics the church should leave well enough alone. One of those topics is government and politics. This is especially true in the current politically charged atmosphere that exists here in the United States. Long time members of Christian congregations have unfortunately left due to a pastor's sermon that incorporated statements about government and/or politics.

However, St. Paul was led by the Holy Spirit to give the Roman Christians his instructions and counsel regarding government. Here in Romans 13:1ff the Holy Spirit uses his pen to tell them how God desires Christians to “be subject to governing authorities.” To be subject is a strong statement in that the original Greek means, “to bring someone under firm control.” In this context, this means the Holy Spirit has inspired Paul to state that Christians are to be under firm control (my emphasis) of the government.

His next statement is also instructive when he writes governing authorities have been established by God. He says those who rebel against them are not just rebelling against them but against God Himself because God instituted their role in society.

God, created the world and said of all of His creation, “It is good (perfect.)” 1 Corinthians 14:33 says, “For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. . .” A few verses later, verse 40 then exhorts, “. . .everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”

As a Christian, God encourages you to obey those who serve in government because He has placed them in this world with authority to be responsible for the citizens under their authority to be at peace and to live “fitting and orderly lives.” Without authorities this country and the world would experience nothing but chaos. (This topic will be continued in tomorrow’s devotion.)

Prayer: Lord, my sinful nature does not want to be subject to anyone, including those who you have placed to govern me. Forgive me and move my heart to recognize them as Your servants placed by you to enable me to live in peace and harmony with my fellow citizens. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

God bless our native land; Firm may she ever stand  
Through storm and night. When the wild tempests rave,  
Ruler of wind and wave, Do Thou our country save  
By Thy great might.

So shall our prayers arise To God above the skies,  
On Him we wait. Thou who art ever nigh,  
Guarding with watchful eye, To Thee aloud we cry:  
God save the state!  
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