God Gave Me a Politician? January 9, 2022

*Romans 13:1-7 Series: Navigating Our Differences with Unity*

Government itself is a gift. Anarchy is the curse. – Albert Mohler

Intro: Does this text do more harm than good?

1. Submit to the authorities because God appointed them
2. Paul preaches submission to revolutionaries

v. 1 *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities.*

Titus 3:1 *Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities …*

John 6:15 *Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again …*

1. Biblical discernment isn’t independent

Romans 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

1. God gave you a politician

v. 1 *there is no authority except from God*

v. 1 *those that exist have been instituted by God*

v. 2 *whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed*

v. 4 *he is God's servant for your good*

v. 4 *he is the servant of God*

1. Only the worthy ones?

1 Peter 2:18 *be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust*

* What are some of the different authorities that would be included in Paul’s use of the term in v. 1?
* Why might the people to whom Paul wrote have been tempted to resist the governing authorities of their day?
* Why would Peter command servants to “be subject … with all respect” even to unjust masters?

1. Submit to the authorities because they carry out God’s justice
2. To enforce justice, God appoints leaders instead of vigilantes

v. 2 *those who resist will incur judgment*

v. 3 *rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad*

v. 4 *if you do wrong, be afraid*

v. 4 *an avenger who carries out God's wrath*

Romans 12:19 *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”*

1 Peter 2:13-15 *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors … For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.*

v. 5 *Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.*

1. Anarchy is worse than imperfect justice

Judges 21:25 *In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

* Why did God appoint Roman dictators to carry out His wrath?
* Do you believe that imperfect justice is better than anarchy? Why/why not?
* According to 1 Peter 2, how can our attitude toward the government “silence the ignorance of foolish people”?

1. Submit to the authorities because God says you owe them
2. The authorities deserve more than your cheque

v. 6 *For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.*

v. 7 *Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.*

1 Peter 2:17 *Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

1. Submission isn’t obedience

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

Acts 4:19-20 *Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.*

1. God’s Word helps us distinguish between submission and compromise

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

Daniel 3:12 … *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.*

* It is believed that Peter was killed by the emperor (Nero) he urged Christians to honour. Was he wrong? Why/why not?
* What’s the difference between submission and obedience?
* How can a Christian know when it’s time to disobey the authority to whom they are called to submit?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Romans 13:8-14

Notes