

GOVERNMENT

ROMANS 13:1-7

How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)

BACKGROUND: Government's success in ruling surprisingly is based in part on its people's conscience. "It (conscience) denotes an abiding consciousness whose nature it is to bear inner witness to one's own conduct in a moral sense." Spiros Zodhiates, The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament, #4893. (Titus 1:15, fn 1:15)

IS ESTABLISHED BY GOD to bring order, protection, and good for your life. (Romans 13:1, Titus 3:1, fn 3:1, John 19:11, Matthew 22:15-21, fn 22:21, Daniel 2:20, 21, fn 2:21, Judges 17:6, fn 17:6) *How does knowing that God established government affect you?*

SERVES AS "DEACONS" (SERVANTS) OF GOD. "...its (government's) job is to humbly serve...government either wittingly or unwittingly serves God...At the end of verse 4 the apostle (Paul) is most explicit about government's beneficial function: 'He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.' The state is given the responsibility of vengeance, a responsibility that is explicitly forbidden to the individual Christian (12:19). The state renders 'evil for evil' (12:17), which the individual Christian must never do." R. Kent Hughes, Romans: Righteousness from Heaven, p.243. (Romans 13:2-4, fn 13:3, 4, I Peter 2:11-17, fn 2:13-17, I Timothy 2:1-4, fn 2:2, Romans 12:17-19, fn 12:19-21[1st]) *Why does God want you not to be vengeful?*

IS LIMITED IN POWER. Since governmental power comes from God, the believer is obligated to respectfully submit to its authority. However, when the government makes immoral demands of a believer or asked him to violate his conscience, then the believer is not under obligation to obey. "The command of God always takes precedence over the command of government...Believers must never sin against their conscience." Hughes, p. 241. (Romans 13:5-7, fn 13:1, Acts 4:1-20, fn 4:7, Acts 5:12-32, fn 5:29, Philippians 3:20, fn 3:20, Psalms 2:1-6, fn 2:4[1st], I Timothy 1:18, 19, fn 1:19) *How could you keep building a good conscience, and why is this good for your government?*

Check up—Are you praying with your spouse and your family? Group—Pray for personal requests and bond together by fellowshiping together.

