

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God’s holiness – man’s sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

The main theme of Romans is that being right with God is on the basis of FAITH in Jesus as Lord and Savior! It emphasizes the ultimate example of the nature of saving faith as seen in Abraham who shows in Romans 4 that we are saved by FAITH ALONE. However, as the Reformers were known to say, “**We are saved by faith alone but the faith that saves does not remain alone.**” We are not saved by works, but true faith has the fruit of works. Faith works! That is the very nature of a true saving faith.

A saving faith is a life-changing kind of faith. If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation never to be the same again (2 Cor. 5:17). Indeed, maturity involves a process and often we struggle and fail in our walk, but yet through it all our essential identity in Christ remains and God continues His work of sanctification in our lives.

And a saving faith affects all the relationships in life. Life is about relationships, and a true saving faith is to make a difference in how one relates to people on every level.

Slide # 2

Faith → Changed Lives

- Rom. 12:1-2 Love for God
- Rom. 12:3-16 Love for the body of Christ
- Rom. 12:17-21 Love for our enemies
- Rom. 13:1-7 Respect for the State

Romans 13:1-7 is the longest passage in the New Testament that deals with Christians and government. The real test of our faith is how we respond to the issue of authority. This starts with the Lordship of God as personally applied but then is reflected in the home, in the body of Christ, in all the relationships of life, and in our relationship with the state.

Paul writes to Roman Christians living in the very heart of the Roman empire, where the authority of Rome was felt most keenly. Nero was on the throne, and he definitely was no friend of Christianity – in fact, he came to be a great persecutor of it.

It is in that context that Paul says to the Christians to be subject to the governing authorities because they are there by the appointment of God. God is totally sovereign over them being there. And then he says, based on that reality, to resist the government is to, in effect, resist God. And that comes with serious consequences. He points out the principle that rulers are a terror to evildoers, but those who do good find their approval.

Paul is not here dealing with exceptions when the Christian is obligated to disobey the government, but rather with the norm in terms of government rule that all citizens generally should obey related to the normal issues of life that are not in conflict with the higher authority of God.

Paul in Romans 13:3 has just stated that if one does evil (in the sense of being a law-breaker), the government is to be feared, but if one does good (in terms of being a good law-abiding citizen), then the government will appreciate you. Again, he is not dealing with exceptions at this point.

Paul now continues his thought in verse 4...

Romans 13:4–7 (NKJV)

4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Romans 13:4 is a KEY verse on the purpose of human government! It serves God's purpose.

God's intended function for Government is to be for our good! The word translated here as "minister" is the Greek word "diakonos" which is translated as "deacon" in places like 1 Timothy 3:8. It literally means servant. Note the ruler is not God, but merely God's servant.

One time I was talking with a police officer and I pointed out to him that the Bible says he is God's minister and he was so surprised to find out about this.

Those in a governing position of authority over us are God's ministers. And they are there for our good! They are there for the welfare of society. They are there for our protection. They are not the enemy.

Paul saw the value of being a Roman citizen. He did not hesitate to use his rights to obtain justice (cf. Acts 16:37; 22:25, 29; 25:11).

Any government is better than no government! Society needs to have someone controlling it, and this is the function of government. Without proper governing authority in place, you have tyranny, chaos, and anarchy where it is every man for himself. That gets really ugly really fast.

As soon as its restraints are removed, man shows himself in his real character. When there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes, we see in the last three chapters of the Book of Judges what were the dreadful consequences.

– **Robert Haldane**

Prior to the Flood of Noah's day, there was no organized human government as such. What defined the society was brutality and violence.

Slide # 3

Genesis 6:11–13 (NKJV)

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was **filled with violence**.

12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

13 And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is **filled with violence** through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

After the Flood, God put certain measures in place to curb the violent tendencies of man, including the installment of human government as seen in Genesis 9:1-17.

When Israel, in their apostasy, descended to the level of having no organized government, it was brutally disastrous.

Slide # 4

Judges 17:6 (NKJV)

6 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Judges 21:25 (NKJV)

25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

The time of the Judges was a period of about 300 years and it marks the darkest period in Israel's history. The only thing worse than a BAD king is NO king. Government keeps a check on society through law and order.

One of the most demonic things that has been propagated in recent years is the "Defund the Police Movement". You talk about crazy – that is beyond crazy. And it wasn't long that those communities who bought into this paid a heavy price for it and were once again seeking to bring back the police.

In Rawanda in April of 1994 more than one million people are estimated to have perished and an estimated 150,000 to 250,000 women were also raped. On April 6th of 1994, the deaths of the Presidents of Burundi and Rwanda in a plane crash caused by a rocket attack, ignited several weeks of intense and systematic massacres. It was anarchy! It was out of control crazy beyond imagination.

One missions leader who was there said he stood on a bridge watching thousands of bodies float beneath him on a river scarlet with blood. Hutu tribesmen had hacked to death with machetes almost a million Tutsis – their neighbors, their fellow parishioners, their school classmates. It was senseless and barbaric. Suddenly the Tusi leader was gone and the Hutu people of the land went crazy with no governing authority to stop them.

As Christians, we are not about this. We don't want all out mayhem where all out rebellion against governing control leads to total anarchy! We are all about being civil and promoting law and order. We as good citizens are to influence society in this way.

The *Pax Romana* (Latin for "Roman peace") is a roughly 200-year-long period (c. 27 BC – AD 180) of Roman history which is identified as a golden age of increased and sustained Roman imperialism, relative peace, order, prosperity, and stability. Paul was appealing to the Christians not to revolt against the Roman Peace. It was during this time that the gospel spread far and wide throughout the known world.

The system of roads, the common Greek language, a universal system of law and order kept the peace leading to a stable society which allowed the spread of the gospel to move quickly throughout the Roman Empire.

Slide # 5

Galatians 4:4 (NKJV)

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Those calling for revolution in our society today really have no idea what they are doing. The Bible says we are to submit to those in authority and pray for them to the end that we might "lead a quiet and peaceable life" (1 Tim. 2:2). We don't want upheaval and pandemonium. We want stability, and Christians should be the leading advocates for this in how we interact with the governing officials.

Paul says the rulers are God's minister to us for good, but "if you do evil be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain". The government as ordained by God has the power of the sword. This indicates the legal use of lethal force.

At the very least, this signifies the right of government to punish evil doers – that is, those who are lawbreakers. This is the government's role! If you are a lawbreaker you should be very afraid because of the severe consequences the authority of the government may bring down on you.

The sense here is that the Government as God's minister, is authorized to use whatever force is necessary to maintain law and order. The sword was commonly recognized as an instrument of DEATH!

Paul used it this way in Romans 8:35.

Slide # 6

Romans 8:35 (NKJV)

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, **or sword?**

Since the word for 'sword' (machaira) has occurred earlier in the letter to indicate death (8:35), and since it was used for execution [see Acts 12:2; Heb. 11:34, 37], it seems clear that Paul means it here as a symbol of capital punishment. – **John Stott**

In the Roman Empire, criminals were typically executed by beheading with a sword (crucifixion was reserved for the worst criminals of the lowest classes). – **David Guzik**

Both Jesus and Paul recognized the state had a legitimate right to use the sword.

Slide # 7

Matthew 26:52 (NKJV)

52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for **all who take the sword will perish by the sword.**

Acts 25:11 (NKJV)

11 **For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying;** but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar."

Rome didn't mess around with serious criminals- they killed them. And because of this they didn't have an out-of-control crime problem. This was a way of deterring crime!

Capital punishment goes back to Genesis 9:6 where God ordained it in the case of murder.

Slide # 8

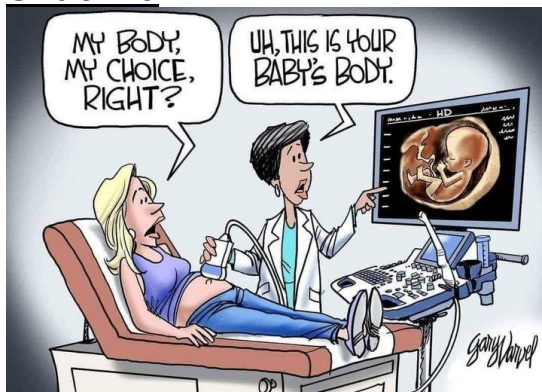
Genesis 9:6 (NKJV)

6 “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

Human life is sacred because mankind is created in the very image God. God says the penalty for the taking of human life (in the sense of murder) is that the perpetrator's life be taken. This rule put in place by God was prior to the Mosaic law and has never been retracted. As seen here in Romans, it is the human government that has been given the sword – not the individual.

Part of the problem in our society is that so many no longer see the sacredness of human life. The result of evolutionary thought, which has had a huge impact on and society and hence government, is that many no longer see anything special about human life. Many think the life of their pet is equal to human life. Human life in the womb is totally devalued. All men are created equal only applies to those born.

Slide # 9



When you no longer recognize the authority of Scripture the result is the devaluing of human life and when this begins to saturate society that impacts the governing authorities, and that results in the breakdown of society in a huge way.

We live in a fallen world, and often, human government is faulty because, in general, it represents the values of society which are often anti-Bible and anti-God. Have you noticed that to be a Christian is very often to be politically incorrect? My hope is not in government but in God. Now I pray for the governing officials, and I am thankful they are there and for the law and order that is still in place – even as deficient as it sometimes appears to be. Again, Paul is speaking in terms of what God has ordained, not necessarily that which is always functionally in place.

One governing official said this:

Law enforcement officials point to the declining rate of criminal convictions as crime itself soars; courts so preoccupied with legal technicalities that they turn vicious criminals loose to roam the streets; undermanned police departments almost everywhere... And the growing number of citizens who assume the right to decide which laws they will obey and which they will not. – **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** (who was president from 1953-1961 – that is over 60 years ago)

There is nothing new under the sun! But when society sets aside what God has ordained in terms of law and order, you can be sure it does so to its own peril, as sadly, we are finding out in the United States today.

Here it is clear that God has ordained force (the sword) to be used by human authorities to prevent anarchy and the tyranny of evil in human society. – **Wycliffe Bible Commentary**

Paul says of the ruling authority, “**he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.**”

This is the second time in verse 4 that Paul has referred to the ruling authority of the state as “God’s minister”. He is God’s minister to us for good, and now he says he is God’s minister as an “avenger to execute wrath” on evildoers.

God is behind the authority that bears the sword. And the governing authority doesn’t bear the sword in vain. It has a purpose – a God-ordained purpose, namely, to be an avenger to evildoers.

The word “avenger” is related to the word “justice” or “vindication”.

When a citizen is raped, robbed, or murdered, what recourse does the person or family have? They look to the God-ordained state to avenge. They cannot personally avenge, but the state can.

Many believe that what Paul says here is an expansion on what he said back in Romans 12:19.

Slide # 10

Romans 12:19 (NKJV)

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

As an individual we are not to avenge ourselves. It is not our place to try and get even. Rather, we are to give it over to God and let Him take care of it. Certainly God will deal with it ultimately on judgment day. In Romans 2:5 Paul said the wicked are storing up wrath against themselves on the day of wrath – that is the final day of judgment.

But here we find that in the present time, God has ministers who are avengers to execute His wrath in the here and now – and that is the governing authorities. In a very real sense, God causes people to reap the consequences of their evil ways through the punishment inflicted by the government. This may include a variety of punishments, but certainly includes the death penalty for the most serious of crimes.

It is important to hold Romans 12:19 and 13:4 together. We human beings, as private individuals, are not authorized to take the law into our own hands and punish offenders. The punishment of evil is God’s prerogative, and during the present age, He exercises it through the law courts. – **John Stott**

Slide # 11**Romans 12:19 (NKJV)**

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

Romans 13:4 (NKJV)

4 For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Vengeance – payback, belongs to God, but one of the tools He uses to avenge wrongdoing is human government!

In summary Paul emphasizes that the state as the minister of God is to promote and reward doing good, but it is also authorized to restrain and punish the doing of evil.

The nature of mankind has not changed. Even the Second Coming will not change the fundamental nature of mankind. Therefore, when Jesus comes He will rule the nations with absolute authority.

Slide # 12

Psalm 2:8–9 (NKJV)

8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

9 You shall break them with **a rod of iron**; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' ”

Revelation 19:15 (NKJV)

15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will **rule them with a rod of iron**. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

Paul here in summary gives two reason we should be subject to the ruling authorities of the state. 1) Because of wrath – that is punishment for being a law-breaker. And 2) for conscience's sake.

As believers, we take the authority of God seriously! Someone who has no regard for the Lordship authority of God is not a true believer.

Slide # 13

Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will** of My Father in heaven.

1 John 2:3–4 (NKJV)

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, **if we keep His commandments**.

4 He who says, “I know Him,” and **does not keep His commandments, is a liar**, and the truth is not in him.

No believer is perfect in their practice. We are all in process.

But every true believer down deep desires to obey the Lord. When we sin we hate it (Rom. 7:15). Yes, we struggle with the flesh. Yes, we often fail (Ja. 3:2). But we are new creations in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). We have the Holy Spirit. We have a new nature. And this reality means that down deep in our core where the Holy Spirit is joined with our new nature we desire to obey the Lord (cf. 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 5:17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Jn. 3:9). Even in failure we still down deep want to obey – because that is the work of the Spirit within us. That is why Paul says, “do not grieve the Holy Spirit” (Eph. 4:30).

So, as a matter of conscience, if we know, as Paul has shown, that God has ordained the governing authorities over us - if we know that, then to resist them is to defy God. In that case, then, as a matter of conscience, we will want to obey them insofar as we can.

Georgi Vins was a Russian pastor who, for many years before the fall of Soviet communism, suffered, along with many others, great persecution for his faith. Yet he recounts that, however severe their repression and mistreatment became, pastors and other Christians determined to obey every law, just or unjust, with the exception of laws that would force them to cease worship or to disobey God’s Word. Following Peter’s admonition, they willingly suffered “for doing what is right,” but not “for doing what is wrong” ([1 Pet. 3:17](#)). They would not “suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler,” but would gladly suffer “as a Christian” (4:15–16).

– ***Shared by John MacArthur***

So the believer feels two areas of pressure concerning obeying the government. There is the external pressure of obeying to avoid experiencing punishment. But then there is also the internal pressure of the conscience. In order to have a clear conscience, we need to properly submit to the governing authorities.

However, bringing the conscience into it introduces a two-way street. On the one hand, as a matter of conscience, we should obey the government at every point possible– whatever they ask us to do.

But on the other hand, as a matter of conscience, if the government demands that we do something contrary to God and His Word, then as a matter of conscience, we are obligated to obey God rather than man.

Slide # 14

Once conscience is brought in, there is a limit: what is against conscience cannot be done. The believer may have to refuse obedience on the grounds of conscience. This is what members of the early church did (cf. Acts 5:29). Conscience at one and the same time obliges us to be obedient and sets a limit to that obedience.

– *Leon Morris*

When it became clear that the Nazis were implementing terrible killing policies pastor Martin Niemoller took his stand against it and continued to preach the truth. As a result, he was thrown into prison. Upon seeing him there, the prison chaplain said to him, ***“What brings you here? Why are you in prison?”*** Niemoller responded by saying, ***“And brother, why are you not in prison?”***

Indeed, we are to render to Caesar the things that are Caesars, and to God the things that are God’s (Matt. 22:21). And this requires being discerning and working out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12-13).

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing.

Because of the threat of the government executing wrath on us and because of conscience, we should obey at every point possible. And this includes paying taxes.

Paul’s reasoning is strong. The governing authorities are there by God’s appointment. They serve a good purpose for society. If we are not subject, we are liable to experience severe punishment, and not only that, as a matter of conscience, we are obligated to obey them.

Well, in view of all this Paul says we are obligated to pay taxes. This definitely fits under rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesars. In fact, Christ in saying this was answering a question about taxes (cf. Mt. 22:17-21).

The first time I had to pay an income tax... I remember how I resented it. In fact, when I sent my tax form in I addressed it to “The Infernal Revenue Service.” They never answered although they did accept my money. The next year I had improved my attitude a bit. I addressed it to “The Eternal Revenue Service.” But I have repented from all those sins, and I now pay my taxes cheerfully.

– *Ray Stedman*

Almost no one delights in paying taxes but Paul says we should do so because the governing officials are “God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing.” Now we might take it that Paul literally is saying this is all they have to do is to collect taxes. However, in the greater context, he is saying that the government promotes the good of society by providing protection, and they deal with evildoers for the good of society, and therefore, it is only right that we support them by paying their taxes.

It is good Paul gave us some forthright instruction here because paying taxes is a challenge. They say the two inevitables in life are taxes and death. Unless you want to go to jail, it is very hard to live a normal lifestyle and avoid paying taxes. They say some of the most terrifying word to hear are: “Hi, I am here from the IRS and I am here to help!”

Rehoboam split the Davidic kingdom in the OT over the issue of taxes (cf. 1 Kings 12:4, 14). The tax collectors in Jesus’ day were among the most hated people in society. The language of the Pharisees was that of “tax collectors and sinners” lumping them together as one (Mt. 9:10-11). A turning point in this country was in what is called “The Boston Tea Party” in which the rallying cry was, “No taxation without representation.”

Someone has quipped...

Slide # 15

TAXABLE

We fought and won our liberty
 When Britain tried to tax our tea.
 And now that we possess that right
 We’re taxing everything in sight.

I read a story about an older lady who had a solution to all the bad politicians. She said we should gather them all up together and put them in one large sack. And then take a stick and start beating the sack. She said, it doesn’t matter which one you hit they all deserve it.

Well, sometimes we might feel that way, but that just shows we can’t go by our feelings. That is not a biblical attitude. Paul for the third time calls the governing officials “God’s ministers”. They have a God ordained role and we should constantly remind ourselves of that reality.

God can use anyone according to His sovereign prerogative and it is good to remind ourselves the God's ways are not our ways (Isa. 55:8).

Slide # 16

Proverbs 21:1 (NKJV)

1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Isaiah 44:28 (NKJV)

28 Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid." '

About 200 years in advance God named Cyrus who would serve as God shepherd to bring about the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the laying of the temple's foundation.

God sovereignly used Cyrus to guide His people where He wanted them to go and what He wanted them to do; but it doesn't seem that Cyrus ever became a true believer. In Isa. 45:4-5 God two times says Cyrus has not known Him. God is so sovereign He can use anyone – even wicked pagans to accomplish His sovereign purposes.

Paul now for the third time speaks of the ruling authorities as being "God's ministers". And if anything, Paul here used a stronger word. In verse 4, he used the word **diakonos** (deacon), meaning servant, but here in verse 6, in relation to collecting taxes, he used the word "**leitourgos**," which is a word used to speak of religious service. It is the word from which we get our English word "liturgy". It is used of angels in Hebrews 1:14 where it speaks of them as "**ministering spirits**". It is used in reference to the sacred duty of priestly ministry in Hebrews 8:2.

So, Paul sees the government as fulfilling a spiritual service that God has ordained in keeping order in society, and because of this, we should pay taxes. They need support in order to be able to do this. Understood this way, paying taxes is a very spiritual thing to do.

The person in office may be a very unworthy person (as was Nero), but the office itself is ordained of God, and therefore, God has ordained that we should pay taxes. Nero's come and go, but the need for stable government continues.

It is to our advantage to live in a society of law and order with police and fire protection, so we must be willing to bear our share of the cost. – **William MacDonald**

Slide # 17

Jeremiah 29:7 (NKJV)

7 And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.

7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

“Render” translates a Greek word signifying the payment of something owed – not a voluntary contribution – and is reinforced by the word “due”. – **John MacArthur**

Render (v. 7) is the same word used by Jesus in Mt. 22:21.
– **The Moody Bible Commentary**

This is Paul’s way of saying, “Whatever belongs to Caesar, give to him!” This includes taxes, customs, fear (respect) and honor to whom it is due.

Taxes is thought to be direct taxes such as property tax and income tax. Customs is thought to be a secondary tax such as sales tax or tolls, etc. The basic idea is that whatever the government demands in terms of taxation or fees we should pay.

Now in our form of government we can protest through proper channels and we can vote, but we should always do so with the right spirit. The one thing we cannot do is refuse to pay our taxes.

Fear here is the idea of proper respect. This does not mean we never speak out against SIN in the government. The issue of sin should properly be addressed. John the Baptist confronted Herod for taking his brother’s wife and got his head cut off for it (Matt. 14:4). Jesus called Herod “that fox” which is thought to refer to either his deceptiveness or his destructiveness (Lk. 13:32). So, there is definitely a place to speak TRUTH to power.

But even so there is a right spirit to go about it and a wrong spirit.

When the Supreme Court legalizes same-sex marriage, we call them out on it, saying that it is a moral perversion that runs contrary to the living Word of God. When the authorities champion abortion, we call it what it is – namely, MURDER. And when we do so, we want to do it in an even-handed, non-political way. For us it is not a matter of politics but rather a matter of biblical morality.

Slide # 18

"As Christians, we may deplore the politics of a particular person in office. We may be repelled by his scandalous conduct. But that does not disallow us from respecting the office. The person is just a human, but the office exists at the discretion of God."

– ***R. Kent Hughes***

One day Paul stood before a council to defend himself. A man there commanded that Paul be smitten on the mouth. Paul in turn cried out, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall...".

Slide # 19

Acts 23:4–5 (NKJV)

4 And those who stood by said, "**Do you revile God's high priest?**"

5 Then Paul said, "**I did not know**, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.' "

In other words, Paul repented, acknowledging that this was out of line because of the principle that you should not speak evil of a ruler of the people.

Respect and honor are pretty close to being synonymous. Again, we may not appreciate what the person in office stands for, but we need to guard our attitude and our words. I don't know about you, but I certainly have been guilty of this at times. It is convicting! Instead of just bad mouthing them we should pray for them as the Bible tells us to do.

Slide # 20

1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)

17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

The Bible teaches that in the last days what will define society is more and more lawlessness. In 2 Thess. 2:7 Paul says, “the mystery of lawlessness is already at work” but at present there is a restraining reality. And I would take it to be that this restraining reality is the Holy Spirit working through the Church.

The world doesn’t realize it but they owe a huge thank you to the Church for God using His people as a restraining reality in the world. Once the Spirit, via working through the Church, is removed, all hell will break loose in the world.

The breakdown of society has a lot to do with a lack of regard for authority. This begins in the home and is seen throughout society, including a lack of respect towards the governing authorities.

As Christians, we should set the tone. Our regard for God as our ultimate authority is to govern our lives. Then our regard for authority in the home, in the Church, and with regard to the governing authorities over us.

Our attitude is to be one of humble submission to God as our ultimate authority and then under Him those He has placed in authority over us.

Since men aren’t angels, we need government.

Since governors aren’t angels, we need tight controls over government.

...

Don’t scream that the sky is falling: Remember that God holds up the sky.

And for all of us, when crunch time comes, as it always does, here’s the crucial question: Whose applause do I want, man’s or God’s?

- **Marvin Olasky**

And how do we please God? We obey Him by obeying the authorities that He has put over us unless they command us to disobey God. Then we ought to obey God rather than men.

Our goal must always be the ultimate approval of God in all that we do!

In the early Church, Rome demanded that citizens throughout the empire show their allegiance by formally declaring that “**Caesar is Lord.**” The early Christians drew a line here, refusing to say this. To them, Jesus alone was Lord! It became the rallying cry of the early church: “**Jesus is Lord**”.

This governs all that the Christian is about in every realm. We submit to every human governing authority as Paul says (Rom. 13:1), and to every ordinance of man as Peter says (1 Pet. 2:13), but we draw the line at ***“Jesus is Lord”***.

He is our commanding authority over all other authorities.

Love for the brethren.

Love for our enemies.

Proper respect and honor for governing authorities.

But worship is reserved for God alone!

Indeed, Jesus ALONE is Lord!