

The Christian's Responsibility to Government

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Romans 13.

B. A Christian has a responsibility to the government to be subject and to pay taxes.

II. Reasons that Christians ought to be subject to government.

A. God has designed government for the protection of life and property.

B. Resistance to government is resistance to God.

C. Those who rebel against God will receive judgment from the government and from God.

D. Government serves to restrain evil, so to refuse government is to refuse the restraint of evil.

1. Rulers in general know the difference between good and evil. (Genesis 2, Romans 2)

2. The unregenerate world has the law of God written on their hearts; that is, they have conscience.

3. Retribution is to be done without pity so that the people will fear doing evil. (Deuteronomy 19, 17:12)

4. Government is to be exercised without partiality. (Deuteronomy 13)

5. Government needs to act immediately with its judgment. (Deuteronomy 25, Ezra 7:26)

6. Paul submitted to government that acted unjustly at times and protected him at other times. We are to be submissive whatever the case. (Acts 16, 19:35)

E. Government serves to promote good.

F. Rulers are empowered by God to promote the most serious government. The power of capital punishment is given to government by God. God's vengeance is channeled through the government, and the murderer is to pay with his life. (Genesis 9, Matthew 26:52, Acts 25:11, Genesis 4:10, 42, Joshua 2:19, II Samuel 4:11, I Kings 2, Leviticus 20:9, 20:13, 20:27, Ezekiel 7:20, 18:10, Numbers 35:33)

G. We are to submit to government for conscience' sake--we know what is right. (I Peter 2:15)

III. Conclusion. We must understand the place of authority although we know who the true King is.

Application questions:

1. What arguments have you heard for the general rejection of government by believers if any? How would you respond?

2. Which argument for submission to government do you find most compelling? Explain.

3. What are your views on capital punishment? How would you respond to the speaker's arguments for it either positively or negatively using Scripture to support your viewpoint?
