

PART SEVEN  
**GOVERNMENT  
& POLITICS**



**STEWARDSHIP**  
MAXIMIZING GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR HIS GLORY  
& OUR BENEFIT

**Romans 13:1-7**

**100,000 CHURCH PASTORS IN  
AMERICA ARE PAID FEMA CAMP  
SHILLS- DON'T TRUST YOUR  
PASTORS!**



I hate to alarm you, but look what I found on the reliable internet this week. Apparently there are 100,000 pastors in our country who are in collusion with the evil empire of the United States to enslave you all in FEMA camps and systematically eliminate 90% of the population. How do you know that I am not one of them?

I was chatting with someone about government conspiracy theories. In my opinion, this is one of the wackiest of them all. Please do me a favor and don't email me more links about this topic. I don't buy into this conspiracy theory and I can tell you why if you really care to know, but I do believe that some conspiracy theories are true. If they were never true, no one would ever believe them. But if some are true, then each time a conspiracy theory is put forth,

it has an air of believability about it.

Here's an example I came across this past week. Five of the world's largest banks have been secretly working together to manipulate the global foreign exchange markets. I am guessing that most of you don't

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MARKETS

## Global Banks to Pay \$5.6 Billion in Penalties in FX, Libor Probes

Citi, J.P. Morgan, Barclays, RBS to plead guilty to conspiring to manipulate exchange rates

U.S. STOCK  
MARKET

# GLOBAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE MARKETS 5 TRILLION

even know what this is, so let me illustrate how huge of a fraud this really is. The red box labeled U.S. Stock Market represent the amount of money that changes hand on a daily basis in the stock markets, which averages at \$134 billion every day. That is obviously an enormous amount of money. However, compare the total US stock market to the global foreign exchange market

(green). Every day about 5 trillion dollars exchanges hands in this market.

So if five of the largest banks in the world were collaborating to artificially move the market in their favor, can you imagine the amount of money that would have been needed to move the market? You can't throw a few million dollars into this 5 trillion dollar exchange and hope to change anything. They must have been manipulating hundreds of millions of dollars at a time to pull this off. And they had to cooperate with one another to make it work, otherwise they would have been competing against one another. So the result is that this was a massive, worldwide conspiracy that went on for years. These five banks are going to be fined five billion dollars for this scam. Do you see the space in the middle of the letter 'R' in the word 'Market?' That is the size of their fine compared to all that they did. It's so small it doesn't even qualify as a slap on the wrist. Moreover, many people believe that the government is in collusion with these sorts of manipulation of the financial markets.

Here's my point. When it comes to the topic of government and politics, we tend to be very jaded and suspicious. And we probably should be to a certain extent. Not to mention the fact that we have begun an 18 month presidential race that is only going to get worse and worse. For the Christian, what should be our relationship to the government? If we can't trust government in general and politicians specifically, then how do we respect them? How do we submit to them? What is our Biblical and stewardship response to the governing authorities? Thankfully we are not left without an answer. Let's read Romans 13 together.

*Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 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. God has appointed the governing authorities.**

Here is a very popular understanding of this passage written by a pastor.

It has been observed by many writers before me that God didn't create Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Genghis Khan or Pol Pot to be mass murderers but they were certainly the "powers that be" at that time. They were the powers of their respective countries, but certainly not deserving of allegiance let alone obedience. If a gang of armed thugs break down your door, beat you up, rape your wife and threaten to kill your children they are certainly the present "powers that be." Does God want us to bow down and ask what else they want? Absolutely not. A literal reading of the passage (Rom 13:1-7) teaches us LEGITIMATE governments are to be obeyed but illegitimate ones are to be opposed. Should we obey God or man? (Acts 5:29) It's a perversion of Scripture to say we are supposed to obey ungodly, rotten people who have grasped temporary control of a government.<sup>i</sup>

**Under ISIS control**

The militant Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has seized the strategic town of Tal Afar. Areas and major cities/towns it controls:

○ Province, city controlled by ISIS ● Under Kurdish control



Do you agree with this interpretation? He has some convincing points here. For example, look at what the Islamic State is doing in Iraq. ISIS now controls most of the major cities in Iraq. Last weekend they captured Ramadi and are now getting closer to taking over the capital of Baghdad. And where they do rule, they have taken over the government, the courts, the infrastructure, schools, hospitals, etc. They run everything. By the standards of Romans 13, is ISIS a governing authority in Iraq? If this happened in the US, would we be required to submit to them? This is not a cut and dry answer. We need to tread carefully here but we also have to dig deep into this passage. So let's explore this first principle-God has appointed the governing authorities.

Verse one is as clear as you can possibly be. *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.*

First, Paul stated the truth negatively: *For there is no authority except from God.* By stating it this way he has just eliminated any possibility of any governing authorities coming into existence without God's sovereign appointment. There is no authority except from God. Wherever you might look throughout the world and throughout history there has never been a governing authority that was not appointed by God. Just in case that was not clear enough, Paul took his explanation a step further and described the same truth positively: *and those that exist have been instituted by God.* There are no authorities that did not come from God and every one that does exist was instituted by God.

	<b>Romans 13</b>	<b>John 1</b>
Negatively	<i>For there is no authority except from God</i>	<i>without him was not anything made that was made</i>

Positively	<i>those that exist have been instituted by God</i>	<i>All things were made through him</i>
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Interestingly, this is the same way that John argued in his gospel to prove Jesus as Creator. John stated the truth both positively and negatively so that it would leave no room for doubt. Just in case anyone might ask, “Did God really create everything?” John’s explanation makes that perfectly clear. And in the same way, if anyone would ask, “Did God appoint every governing authority?” Paul’s explanation makes that abundantly clear.

“But how can that be?” some might ask. “What about Hitler, Stalin and Pol Pot, just like this guy asks? Did God really appoint them?” To answer that question, we go right back to verse one. *For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.* “But how can that be? All of these men and their governments were evil” you say. Listen, all governments are evil, it’s all a matter of degrees. Is the government of the United States evil? Yes, but I would argue that it is far less evil than the Communist rule in China. And China is less evil than North Korea. Do you think that God appointed the governing authorities in the U.S., China and North Korea? If you disagree, then you will find yourself arguing with verse one, which I think is an iron tight argument.

I think the real struggle is happens when we combine verse one with verse two. *Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.* If every governing authority is appointed by God and if we are to submit to every governing authority, then where does that leave us? Are we to submit to the Hitlers of the world?

The guy I quoted before brought in Acts 5:29. Peter and the apostles boldly announced to the Sanhedrin, “We must obey God rather than men.” This must be paired with Romans 13. I am not saying that we must fully and always submit to everything that every government tells us to do. We will get to civil disobedience eventually as this is vitally important. But before we get to what it means to disobey the government, we must first establish what it means to obey and submit to the government in the first place. In other words, if we fail to understand Romans 13 in its context and full impact, we will never understand Acts 5:29.

This pastor went astray when he wrote this. “A literal reading of the passage (Rom 13:1-7) teaches us LEGITIMATE governments are to be obeyed but illegitimate ones are to be opposed.” By the way, I keep lifting quotes from this pastor because I think he summarizes a popular understanding of Romans 13. Now you tell me. Does a literal reading of Romans 13 teach us that legitimate governments are to be obeyed but illegitimate ones are to be opposed? It says nothing of the sort. This man could not be more wrong. The literal reading is this: *For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.* There is nothing explicit or implicit about legitimate vs. illegitimate governments. It just plainly says that all governing authorities have been established by God and that we are to submit to them. And if we do not submit, then we are opposing what God has ordained.

It is dangerous to import this foreign idea of legitimate and illegitimate governments for two reasons. First, the text says nothing about this! Second, it gives you a permanent built in excuse. If you don’t like a certain law or a certain politician, all you need to do is declare them to be illegitimate and you are off the hook. You could really carry this to an extreme. You could even

declare the U.S. is an illegitimate government and decide that you don't need to pay taxes or submit to a certain law. It's a very dangerous precedent to set.

I'll say it again. Before you can begin to think about which laws you can rightly disobey—and this is a rare occurrence itself—possible and necessary on occasion, but rare. Before you can make that decision, you first must fully grasp what Scripture says about God ordaining *all* governing authorities. Therefore, if you do eventually disobey a certain law, then you will be clear that it is civil disobedience. If you merely declare a government of a law to be illegitimate, then you can never really disobey it.

Next I want to show you some other Biblical evidence for God ordaining all governing authorities. Listen to what Daniel said when God gave him the exact interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. *He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings* (Daniel 2:21). This is what Daniel said when God gave him the interpretation of a second dream of Nebuchadnezzar. *The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men* (Daniel 4:17).

You could say, "Well of course Daniel would say this. He was a Godly man." True, but look what the evil dictator Nebuchadnezzar said about this same subject.

34 At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;  
35 all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" (Daniel 4:34-35)

The Lord even referred to Nebuchadnezzar as "my servant." *Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant* (Jeremiah 27:6). Cyrus, king of Persia was called "my shepherd." *Who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'* (Isaiah 44:28). These two kings were probably still pagans. The Lord did not call them servants and shepherds because they were righteous people but because they both unwittingly did God's will. They served God's purposes because God was the one who appointed them in the first place.

God often used Israel's enemies to discipline his people. Judges 3:12 says that *the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel*. God appointed an evil empire to bring judgment on his chosen people.

Who was the most evil ruler in human history? Some of you will immediately think of Hitler. But in my opinion, the most evil ruler in human history was Pontius Pilate. He gave the order for Jesus to be crucified. Despite this overwhelming evil, listen to how Jesus described governing authorities as he faced down Pilate.



*So Pilate said to him, “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?” 11 Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. (John 19:10-11)*

It’s often mentioned that when Paul wrote Romans 13 that the crazed dictator Nero was emperor of Rome. So Paul did not say *For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God* with the possible exception of Rome and most of Israel’s enemies. There are no caveats, there are no exceptions implied or otherwise.

Finally we see that the apostle Peter said almost the exact same thing in his first letter. *Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. (1 Peter 2:13-19)*

There are three basic positions that every person has toward the governing authorities. Anarchy-This is what you get with no laws and no government. Anarchy is when Iraq slowly succumbs to the Islamic State. We don’t want that. I also see some Christians who border on anarchy. They are so dead set against the government. They continually question the authority of the local police, the federal government and everything in between. These Christians are not anarchists in the sense that they don’t want any laws at all or they want the U.S. government to be overthrown but neither do they have a Biblical understanding that this pastor I’ve been quoting is wrong. Every governing authority is ordained by God. There are no exceptions.

The other side of the spectrum is what could be called extreme patriotism. We were in a church this past winter where the pastor went off on a ten minute rant about how he loves America. It had nothing whatsoever to do with the topic for the night. He just went on and on about how great America is and how he loved her with a passionate love. It was really strange.

What Paul presents and what I have been trying to represent is a proper Biblical Submission to governing authorities. Even as I describe the extreme positions, very few people are at the far ends of anarchy or extreme patriotism. But neither are very many of us in the middle of Biblical submission.

ANARCHY-----BIBLICAL SUBMISISON-----EXTREME PATRIOTISM

It just so happens that this is Memorial Day weekend. I didn’t plan it that way. I want to finish by playing a [clip of a speech by Ronald Reagan](#) and then make a few comments.

You don’t hear political speeches like that anymore, do you? And our nation has fallen deeper into depravity since Reagan spoke these words. Despite what you may or may not think about conspiracy theories and our current elected officials, we need to agree with Scripture that God has ordained the United States of America and our authorities who govern her. I’ve really barely scratched the surface of this passage and so next week we will delve further into our relationship to government. But for now, in the spirit of this message and or Memorial Day, I’d like to ask

everyone who has ever served in the military or on a police force of any kind to stand. We thank you for your service to our nation and to us, its people.

Rich Maurer  
May 27, 2015

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.newswithviews.com/guest\\_opinion/guest285.htm](http://www.newswithviews.com/guest_opinion/guest285.htm)