

## **God, Government, and Me**

The topic of government, its purpose, and our role and responsibility regarding it, is one that can be very divisive. Agreed right? This is a challenging topic (especially in an election year!). We often have strong thoughts and feelings about government and our relationship to it. Thankfully, we are not left to figure it out on our own. Scripture does give us guidance. Today, we are looking at a passage that addresses government and how we should think about it and relate to it.

**Opening Discussion:** In your own life how would you evaluate the balance of praying for our elected officials as opposed to the time you spend complaining about them?

### **Read Romans 13:1-7**

1. Think about the context of the Roman believers as they received these words. What was their situation in terms of the government they were under?
2. What does it mean to be subject to the governing authorities?
3. What reason does Paul give for every person being in subjection to governing authorities?
4. What responsibilities does this passage place on us?
5. What do you think Paul means when he says that we should give fear to whom fear is due and honor to whom honor is due (v. 7)? What are some practical ways we can obey these instructions?

Sam said:

We may not always understand the why or the how, but God promises us that he is always in control. Whether we find ourselves submitting to a good government or bad government, we can take comfort in the knowledge that we're truly, ultimately submitted to the only ruler who cannot fail us and will not forsake us. So, when considering what it means for God to have appointed and established all human government, first we need to remember that because God appoints all human authority, it means God is always, ultimately in control.

6. In times when we struggle with what it means to live under the authority of those who govern us, how might it help to remember that God ultimately establishes all authority?

Sam said:

The third thing we need to consider when seeking to understand our relationship to government is when, if ever, Paul's rule of being subject to the governing authorities should be broken. This is a very, very complex issue that will require a great deal more consideration and discernment than I can give it in the few minutes we have here this morning. The reality is sometimes we may find ourselves faced with a command from our governing authorities we feel directly opposes a command we've been given from God.

7. How would you make a biblical case that at times it is appropriate to not obey our governing authorities?
8. What other questions does this passage raise in your mind?
9. How do you sense God addressing your life through this passage?