

How Your Children Should Think about the Government

I. God rules over all rulers.

- Job 12:23-23; Psalm 22:28; Daniel 2:21; Proverbs 21:1; John 19:10-11; Psalm 2; Daniel 4
- This is so comforting to everyone who calls himself a Christian. We do not need to fear men. The worst thing they can do to us is send our bodies to the grave, but the God Who is powerful enough to give and take physical and *spiritual* life rules over every man. None of them do anything without His consent.
- This means that governments as a whole are just as responsible to God as individuals are. He is the King, He is the ruler, and it doesn't matter how many people you throw in a room and how much power they proclaim themselves to have . . . they will never usurp God's authority.
- Even though they may rage against God — as recorded in Psalm 2 — the Lord is untouched by their protestations. This why God confused the languages at the Tower of Babel.
- If Christians simply acknowledged that all human government is subordinate to the will of God, it would drastically change how we view and respond to our authorities.

II. Christians are to pray for rulers.

- I Timothy 2:1-4
- Whereas the first point established the fact that God is sovereign over ruling authorities, this point establishes the fact that governments — like individuals — are responsible for their actions.
- But it also establishes that Christians are to care that their emperors and presidents and kings and prime ministers submit to the rule of God.
- God makes it clear that the goal for human authority is that righteous men and women be able to lead tranquil and quiet lives in godliness and dignity. That is good and acceptable governance in the sight of God. That kind of leadership creates an atmosphere where people can come to the knowledge and of the truth of God.
- And Christians are to work toward that end. We should pray for it, and — by extension — those of us who are blessed enough to have a choice in who leads our nations, we should vote accordingly.
- It would be an affront to God to vote for someone who would mistreat those who are trying to live godly and dignified lives.

III. Rulers are to obey God.

- **Rulers are to obey God by accomplishing God's purposes for them.**
 - God does have expectations for human governance, and — just like all individuals — God expects that governments submit to reality.
- **Rulers are to obey God by not requiring citizens to sin.**
 - As governments work to fulfill their God-given responsibilities, they should never command, enable, or embolden its people to sin.
 - A very applicable example of this is abortion. God cannot abide a government that advocates and promotes and requires its people to fund the wholesale murder of children.
 - Now, we're not saying that a good government will legislate religion. The government is not in a position to declare what is holy and unholy, but simply that a good government will fulfill the tasks God has given it and will do so in line with God's expectations.

IV. Christians are to obey rulers when the rulers obey God.

- Titus 3:1-2; I Peter 2:13-17; Romans 13:1-7; Matthew 22:15-22; I Peter 2:18-20
- First we're going to see what God expects rulers to do, and then we're going to acknowledge that Christians should never disobey the government when they're ruling in line with God's revealed will.
- God desires that human rulers punish evildoers and praise those who do right. But who gets to determine what is evil and what is good? Does the emperor get to decide? No! Decidedly and 100%, no! It is obvious that the righteous One, the standard for holiness and goodness and truth and the Creator of this world gets to be the One Who determines what is right.
- It's the government's responsibility to know and submit to that definition, create an atmosphere conducive to that kind of lifestyle, and when citizens are evil, it's the government's responsibility to punish them accordingly.
- There could not be a clearer expectation from God to government. "When your people obey me, praise them. When they do what I say is evil, you are responsible to bear the sword and avenge me."
- This is extremely powerful since God tells individuals in Romans 7:24 that they are not to seek vengeance because God will repay evil. But here — six chapters later — we learn that God has appointed earthly government to be part of avenging evil. In the Greek, these words have the exact same root idea.
- That is a big task that God does not entrust to any one human, but to an institution comprised of humans.
- The Lord reveals that taxation is right and appropriate, but the implication is that the taxation will be used as the government fulfills its responsibility to God as His servant devoting themselves to His purposes.

V. Christians are to disobey rulers when the rulers expect the Christians to disobey God.

- Acts 4:18-20, 5:28-32
- We did *not* say that Christians are to disobey rulers who *disobey God*. That blanket statement could be very easily manipulated and applied incorrectly.
- On the other hand, any authorities (parents included) who expect those under them to do and say things that would displease the Lord are in fact sinning against God. They are disobeying God by commanding their subservients to sin.
 - **Christians must read the Bible and pray.**
 - **Christians must assemble as a body of believers.**
 - **Christians must worship God.**
 - **Christians must not deny God.**
 - **Christians must not murder.**
 - **Christians must not endorse sin of any kind.**

When it come to teaching our kids about government, the Bible is clear that God is in control, God sets up and takes down governments, nothing happens outside of His will, government is designed to do God's will and should be obeyed when it does, but it should not be obeyed when it expects us to sin. Therefore, anything and everything the government does *should* be compared to the Scriptures.