

The Christian's Responsibility to Government, Part 2

Scripture: Romans 13:1–3a

Code: 45-98

INTRODUCTION

Christianity is a total life experience. It is not an addendum to life. It touches every element of life--our thoughts, words, deeds, and relationships. Nothing is left unaffected by the transformation that the Lord Jesus Christ brings about in a life. Christianity cannot be isolated from any part of life. A study of the New Testament will show that the Spirit of God is involved in the totality of the Christian experience. In Ephesians 5 and 6, every relationship is touched by the Spirit of God in the life of a believer. It discusses husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, and servants. Colossians 3 talks about the same thing. Every relationship is impacted by the power of Christ.

A. The Intention of Romans

In Romans 13:1 the Apostle Paul says that our Christianity affects our relationship to those in authority over us--to government and its rulers on a local and national level. We are given some very strict and clear direction from the Spirit of God on how we are to relate to the government. In Romans, Paul has told us that since we have been justified by grace through faith, made right with God, made citizens of His heavenly Kingdom, and are now controlled by His Holy Spirit and living under His lordship, every dimension of life is different. In Romans 12:1-2, as a result of our new relationship with God, we are to present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices. Then beginning in verse 3, Paul talks about our relationship to other believers. We are to minister to them, love them, and be kind to them. Our relationship to those who have needs is discussed in verse 13. We are to distribute to the necessity of saints and be hospitable. Then Paul talks about our relationship to those who reject and hate the gospel. We are to bless and not curse those who persecute us (v. 14). Verse 21 says that we are to repay evil with good. We are not to wreak vengeance on anyone (v. 19). Paul is saying in the book of Romans that all our relationships are impacted by our justification.

B. The Impact of Justification

Many people believe that the epistle to the Romans is a great treatise on the doctrine of salvation. May I suggest that his discourse on salvation is only a means to an end? If Paul wanted to focus on the matter of justification only, he would have ended the epistle in chapter 11. But he doesn't. He goes on to deal with the implications of the doctrines that were laid down in the first eleven chapters. It is essential for the Christian to understand that his relationship to his government and those who are in authority over him is dramatically influenced by his salvation. We are called to live as model citizens so that we may reach the world around us with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. 1 Peter 2:12-15

Peter says, "Having your behavior honest among the Gentiles, that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." How can we get unbelievers to glorify God? Peter says, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (vv. 13-15). How you behave under the authorities in your country or city will demonstrate the legitimacy of your faith in Christ to that society. That is why we are to submit to whoever is in authority over us.

2. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy with instruction for the church. First Timothy 3:15 says, "[I want you to] know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church." Here is the principle of behavior for the church: "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Savior, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:1-4). There are two essential points that come out of those verses. a) Pray for the authorities We are to pray and give thanks to God for kings and all those in authority so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. If we want to live the kind of godly life that God wants us to live, we need to pray for those in authority over us. We will not affect our rulers by protest, disobedience, or revolution, but by prayer. We need to come to God in prayer so that we may lead a life of integrity. That is God's will for us because men will come to know the Savior when they see His people living godly lives. (1) Jeremiah 29:7--"Seek the peace of the city to which I have caused you to be carried away captives." God's message to the Jews in captivity in Babylon was to seek the peace of that place. They were prisoners, but they were to seek peace and pray to the Lord for the nation of Babylon. The instruction of 1 Timothy 2:1-4 was given by Jeremiah: If you want peace in a society so that you can enjoy and spread your faith, then pray for those in authority over you. That is God's design. (2) 2 Corinthians 10:4--"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." The most powerful weapon that we as believers have to pull down the strongholds of the enemy is prayer. Revolution has no place in the Christian life; prayer is the priority.

In a significant book written by Robert Culver entitled, *Toward a Biblical View of Civil Government*, Culver says, "Churchmen whose Christian activism has taken mainly to placarding, marching, protesting, and shouting might well observe the author of these verses first at prayer, then in counsel with his friends, and after that preaching in the homes and market places. When Paul came to be heard by the mighty, it was to defend his action as a preacher ... of a way to heaven" ([Chicago: Moody Press, 1974], p. 262). In other words, when it comes to political changes and governmental issues, pray. If you're going to be thrown into prison, make sure you're there for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and not political protest.

b) Radiate saving grace The goal of praying for the government is to lead a quiet and peaceable life so that you will have opportunity to see men saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. We pray that God will allow us the privilege of living a peaceable, quiet life to radiate the saving grace of Jesus Christ. A tranquil life is to be the distinctive mark of a Christian.

3. 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12

I grieve when I hear rhetoric of anger, violence, and revolution. Paul says, "We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more [in love], and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that ye may walk honestly toward them that are outside, and that ye may have lack of nothing." All we can expect from government is protection of life and property. If government does that, it serves God's intended purpose. Unfortunately, I see failures in those areas, even in American society. For example, with the number of lawsuits the government tolerates, many innocent people have to make great sacrifices just to defend themselves. Maintaining innocence comes at a great cost. I also believe that the United States fails in the protection of life when it allows millions upon millions of abortions. In spite of those things, we must pray and live a peaceful life. We influence the world by godly living and bold, confrontive, forthright preaching of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ--not by political protest or efforts to overthrow the government. The gospel must be our message. Like the prophets, Amos, Nahum, and Malachi, we have every right to confront the sins of our society from the viewpoint of the Word of God. But we should not engage in political acts of violence or revolution against the government.

I. THE PRINCIPLE (v. 1a)

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers."

That is the bottom line command given to Christians. It does not discuss the character or qualifications of the authority. It doesn't discuss whether the authority is good or bad, elected or appointed, or a republic or a monarchy; it just says that we are to be subject to them.

A. The Definitions

B. The Duty

1. The responsibility

In Matthew 23:2-3 our Lord spoke to people at the Temple and said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All, therefore, whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do." The scribes and Pharisees had a God-given place of authority. However, the Lord also said not to be like them because they were hypocrites. But their authority had been granted by God even though they were still perverse men. I'm amazed that in spite of the clarity of this command, many people persist in disobeying it, not only in American society and culture, but in others as well. Jesus never taught His people to storm the bastille, revolt against the king, kill unjust rulers, march on city hall, barricade an administration building on campus, lead a sit-in at the President's office, harass leaders, or violate the law. The form of government was never an issue. It doesn't matter if it's capitalistic or socialistic, a democracy or a monarchy. The issue is simple: We are supposed to reach the world. To do so we have to demonstrate a godly, virtuous, peaceable life that will be attractive to others. If we are to let our light shine in a perverse and wicked generation, it must be "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

2. The limitation

There is only one occasion tolerated in Scripture for violating the command to obey the government: when it demands us to do what God has forbidden us to do, or demands us not to do what God has commanded us to do. a) The example of Peter and John

Lesson

- b) The example of Daniel Daniel is a very clear and precise illustration of a man who refused to do what the king said because it would be in violation of what God had commanded. (1) The predicaments (a) Dietary defilement In Daniel 1, Daniel had been taken captive into Babylon with other young princes of Israel. Their Hebrew names are in verse 6: Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Verse 8 says, "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank." Daniel was instructed by the Babylonian monarch to eat his food. But to do that would have violated what Daniel knew to be a law revealed by God. The Jews had very circumspect dietary laws and Daniel would not defile himself with food that was not prescribed by God. (i) The appeal Daniel's attitude was characterized by a spirit of submission. Verse 8 says that he "requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." Daniel asked permission of the one who was over him and under the king. He asked for a test: "I'll commit myself to eating what I prefer to eat. After ten days you come back. We'll examine those who have eaten the king's food and compare them to me. I will eat just vegetables. Then we'll see who looks the best" (vv. 12-13). That was a conciliatory way for Daniel to seek to obey God without becoming abrasive to the man who was carrying out orders from his king. (ii) The approval According to verse 14, the man consented to the test. When the ten days were ended, he checked everyone. Daniel and his friends surpassed all the others and rose to places of prominence. Daniel could have protested and been disrespectful to the one over him. He could have bad-mouthed the king. But he sought a conciliatory means to obey God without compromise in the midst of a difficult situation. (b) Prevented prayer In Daniel 6 is the familiar account of Daniel in the lions' den. The setting is now

the Medo-Persian Kingdom.

The Honor of Serving in Government There is nothing wrong with serving in a civil, state, or federal government position. It is an honored position. Daniel is the best example of that truth in Scripture. Every time he avoided compromise, he received a greater reputation. As a result of his uncompromising spirit, he was constantly promoted until he became the prime minister of the Medo-Persian kingdom. It is an honor to serve in government, not a dishonor. But it was Daniel's conciliatory yet uncompromising attitude that caused him to prosper. In Daniel 6:4-9, the princes of the kingdom wanted to get rid of Daniel, so they got the king to sign an edict that no one was to pray to anyone but the king. Of course, Daniel continued with his prayers because he knew that was right before God. For his obedience to God he was thrown into a den of lions. But Daniel was never disrespectful. Verse 21 says, "Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever." That appears to be a strange thing for a man to say to the one who is about to throw him into a den of lions, but Daniel understood that the powers that be are ordained of God. He trusted that no matter what the king did, he was in the hands of God, who delivered him. Verse 28 says, "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus, the Persian."

(2) **The pattern** The uncompromising approach of Daniel and his friends meant disobeying the government. But Daniel's attitude serves as a model for all those who have to face the reality that you can't do what the government says when it conflicts with what God desires. Daniel and his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah never wavered from honoring the king or being respectful. Let me give you the pattern I see flowing out of the experience of Daniel. (a) **Obeys in the Spirit** Normally, we obey, respect, and do everything we can to please those in authority. We are to be model citizens--obedient not only outwardly, but also in spirit. (b) **Disobey only out of necessity** We resist and disobey only when we are commanded to do something the Word of God forbids, or are forbidden to do something the Word of God commands. Those two occasions are illustrated in Daniel's prophecy. He would not do what the Word of God forbade--eat certain kind of food. And he would not stop doing what God had commanded him to do--pray. (c) **Attempt peaceful resolve** When government and the Word of God conflict, we should not disobey until we have done all we can to try to resolve the conflict peacefully. Daniel went to his leader and said, "Isn't there something we can work out so I can maintain my convictions and you can carry on with your responsibilities?" (d) **Be willing to suffer punishment** If disobedience is necessary, we must be willing to suffer the consequent punishment. If we are called to obedience and our government tells us we will be punished for disobedience, then we have to quietly and peacefully accept it, just as Daniel did when he went into the lions' den. We must commit ourselves to the God's care--and we couldn't be in safer hands. We should always have a respectful and honorable attitude to our authorities. That kind of attitude speaks volumes about the integrity of the Christian faith. Christianity is not a political lobby or a social perspective limited to a particular concept of social or economic existence; it is a matter of the salvation of man's soul.

II. THE REASONS (vv. 1b-5)

We are to be subject to the powers that are over us. Why? Paul gives seven logical reasons.

A. Government Is Decreed by God (v. 1b)

"For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God."

Any form of civil authority comes directly from God. Government is an institution, just like marriage. It doesn't matter who the couple is, what their life-style is like, or what their level of commitment is because marriage is instituted by God, not by man. The church is another institution of God. The makeup of the participants doesn't determine the relevancy of the institution, but the facts that God ordains it does.

1. **Power reflects the purpose of God**

Paul says, "There is no power but of God." That means there is no power in existence that isn't

reflective of the purpose, will, and authority of God. No civil government exists in any nation of the world apart from God. Psalm 62:11 says, "Power belongeth unto God." All power, all creation, all things in heaven and earth belong to God. The entire world belongs to Him. Man exists solely as a result of God's creative act and will. God created the world for His own purposes. He alone is sovereign. Anyone who possess any sovereignty on earth had it delegated to him by God.

2. Governmental power is ordained by God

All governmental authority is from God. You say, "Are you also referring to communist China and the Soviet Union?" Yes. All power that exists is ordained of God. There is not one power that is not reflective of a God-ordained authority. He is the ultimate sovereign.

When the apostle Paul preached on Mars' Hill in Acts 17, he said this about the nations in verse 26:

"[God] hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." God is the One who designed and created nations. The gift of authority is a divine gift. No tyrant ever seized power without God allowing him to. a) The questions You are probably asking yourself some questions: What about the cruel governments? How can you say that about communist governments? How can you say that about Adolf Hitler? How can you say that about abusive governments? How can you say they are ordained of God? I didn't say it; the Bible did. There is no power but of God, and the power that exists is ordained by God.

What about cruel abuses in government? The injustices of government are no reflection of God's holy nature and will anymore than divorce in marriage is, but marriage is no less an institution of God. Although there is apostasy in the church, it still is an institution ordained of God and the apostasy is no reflection of the nature of God. Abuses do not deny the sacredness or authority in any of God's institutions--be it the home, church, or government. To be honest, men abuse all God's gifts. Wicked rulers are part of God's plan to punish wicked nations and allow evil to run its course toward destruction.

b) The purpose If the truth were known, God has designed by His sovereign purpose a reason for every government that exists on the face of the earth. Some exist for the benefit of people who have done well, some for the punishment of those who have done evil. We cannot second-guess God's purpose for instituting a certain kind of government in a certain place. He has ordained government to protect and preserve men--to protect their life and their property. To do that, government has been given the role of repressing evil and honoring virtue. Paul says, "The powers that be are ordained by God." They are not ordained by the will of the majority. The majority simply reflects the sovereign purpose of God. The powers that be are God's design, and that means any governmental power. So the first reason for submitting to government is that it exists by the decree of God. Government is expressive of the divine will--sometimes He wants to punish a nation, sometimes He wants to prosper a nation. Sometimes He wants to bless a people, sometimes He chooses to judge a people. But government, in all its forms, is decreed by God.

B. Resistance to Government Is Rebellion Against God (v. 2a)

"Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God."

If you resist your government, you are resisting an institution of God.

1. The definitions

The Greek word that is translated "ordinance" here is *diatage*. The word means "institute." The Greek word for "resisteth" is *antitasso*, and is used here in the perfect tense. The verse could read, "Whoever has--and continues to have--a permanent attitude of resistance against the government is resisting God." In 1839, Robert Haldane in his wonderful commentary on Romans wrote, "The people of God, then, ought to consider resistance to the government under which they live as a very awful crime--even as resistance to God Himself" (An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans [MacDill AFB, Florida: MacDonald Publishing Co., n.d.], p. 579).

2. The duty

It was of no consequence whether the Roman emperor was kind or good, a persecutor or lover of Christians, elected by the people, appointed by the senate, or took power in a military coup. It was not important whether the assertion of imperial authority by Caesar was just or unjust, good or wicked. None of those things matter. Government, in whatever form it takes, exists for the purpose of God. That is why resistance and rebellion against government is resistance and rebellion against God.

Unless it is obvious that the government has overstepped its bounds and is forcing you to do something that is contrary to all that Scripture indicates, we are to obey it. God operates in the maintenance of government. We are to honor that government, whether it is represented by the President, the governor, the senate, the house, or the police.

Do you remember David's horror when he had occasion to kill Saul (1 Sam. 24:7)? He wouldn't do it because he understood the truth of honoring the one in authority. The people of Israel were to teach their children that the penalty for being disobedient to one's parents was death. That impressed upon everyone the need to give honor to authority (Ex. 21:15, 17). Government is divinely decreed and to resist it is to resist God.

C. Resistance to Government Results in Punishment (v. 2b)

"They that resist shall receive to themselves judgment."

If you resist the government, you're going to be punished. The Greek word *krima* means "judgment." It is used in 1 Corinthians 11:29 of the judgment of God. But it is used in Romans 13:2 primarily in reference to the punishment that God brings through civil authorities. God has ordained government to punish evildoers. If you resist the government, you will be punished. But if you are like Daniel and have to resist because you have a higher command from God's Word, then you accept the punishment. But if you choose to resist because you want to, you will deserve punishment.

1. The methods of punishment

A study of punishment in the Old Testament is fascinating. There were several methods.a) Restitution Whatever was taken had to be brought back. Our home was robbed recently. Some things of great value were taken, such as a gold watch that had been my grandfather's and some of the silver my wife and I received when we were married. The police called sometime later to tell us that they had caught the men who robbed us. Unfortunately, our items had been taken to a fence somewhere in Hollywood and had been melted down and removed before the police could recover them. They went on to tell us that one of the criminals was released on bail while the other one was being held because of an outstanding warrant for his arrest. Then they said, "We regret to say that there is no way you'll ever recover the goods that were taken." That made me think about the Old Testament pattern of restitution. A criminal wasn't punished by putting him away in some prison; he was given the dignity of paying off his debt to the nation by working with his hands. Ephesians 4:28 says, "Let him that stole steal no more but, rather, let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." The implication is to restore a man's dignity so he can make restitution.b) Corporeal punishment Punishment was also physical. It was often executed by whippings so that pain came instantaneously and shame was public. But then it was over and the person went on with life. He had paid for his crime. If he committed another crime, he would be punished again.c) Capital punishment

If the crime was worthy of death (there were some thirty- five different crimes that carried the death penalty), the person was put to death quickly. The system of punishment in Israel was very simple. For lesser crimes, there was corporeal punishment and restitution. For greater crimes, there was death.

2. The objectives of punishment

The objective in punishment was multiple. First, it was a matter of justice. Second, it was a deterrent to crime. Third, it was a restraint on criminals. Fourth, it allowed for rehabilitation--the penalty was paid and the person continued with life. He wasn't put into prison with other criminals so he could

learn how to be a better criminal. Immediate punishment also prevented private vengeance. **Are Prisons Biblical?** There were no prisons in Old Testament Judaism, and there is no indication from the text of the Old Testament that the Israelites were to operate prisons. They were a part of the Roman social order and other pagan societies. In Jeremiah 37:15, Jeremiah was incarcerated in a home that was made into a prison. That indicates to me they didn't have one. Prisons are not endorsed biblically. Instantaneous payment of the penalty was exacted from all criminals. Severe punishment, such as lashes and whippings, were given. Then the opportunity to make restitution was also given, which restored the man's dignity. In the early days of America, the Puritans used corporeal punishment. You may remember from your American history books the pictures of people sitting in stocks with their heads, hands, and arms stuck through holes. We say, "Oh, how painful! I can't imagine being that way for three or four days!" They used corporeal punishment because they understood it was scriptural. For severe crimes, the punishment could have been banishment or even execution. The Quakers first introduced the prison system in America. The first American prison was called the "Walnut Street jail." By 1790 the law had established imprisonment as the normal way to punish criminals. There are a half million prisoners in the United States today. We have the highest crime rate in the western world. You ask this question: Do prisons work? The answer is: No. Prisons are breeding grounds for homosexuality and brutality. Crime schools operate within prisons. One writer calls the American prison system "unbiblical, inhumane, ineffective, inefficient, and idiotic." According to statistics released in 1982, we punish twenty-five out of every five hundred criminals who commit serious crimes. The twenty-five that are punished are put someplace where they sit for years. Many people advocate the rights of prisoners. Many prisons are becoming country clubs, so much so that criminals often don't mind being there. They receive free meals and are cared for by the state.

3. The expedience of punishment

In the Old Testament economy, the government had the rights to punish people immediately and physically. They enforced restitution, which allowed the criminal the opportunity to gain back his dignity and pay his debts. The restitution process was usually conducted by assigning that criminal to a family. He lived with and was cared for by that family while he worked out his restitution. What a dignified way to restore a man's character! Whatever the crime demanded, the punishment was to be given swiftly. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." If a speedy sentence is not brought about, men will do evil. And sentencing for crimes is not performed speedily at all in American society. Punishment of evildoers is a God-given right to the government. When a person violates the law, he should expect to be punished because God has given the state the right to do so. Human authority performs the punishment, but only as representatives of God. The instruments of punishment are human, but the source of the laws is God.

The Breakdown of Government When we forget that government is an institution of God and begin to allow evil to go unpunished, the entire government begins to break down. I fear that politicking isn't going to change that. I think we are watching the collapse of American government and society. There's only one way to change that, and it's not by political action. The saving gospel of Jesus Christ is to be our priority. We are to submit to the government because it is from God, to rebel against it is to rebel against God, and to resist it brings punishment.

D. Government Serves to Restrain Evil (v. 3a)

"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil."

Did you know that even a communist Chinese or Soviet government restrains evil? All the governments behind the Iron Curtain governments restrain evil. There is no government on the face of the earth that will punish you for failure to rape someone, rob someone, or murder someone. Even the worst kind of governments deal rightly with matters of right and wrong.

I was talking with someone from Ethiopia not too long ago who told me that Ethiopia is in

unbelievable governmental turmoil. We would say that would be the worst kind of governmental situation. I asked this individual what the crime situation was like in Ethiopia. I was told that three years ago there was a rape in Addis Ababa (the capital of Ethiopia and a city of a million people). But there hasn't been one since because the rapist was hanging in the marketplace the next day. Now, you might not like the politics and style of the government in Ethiopia, but like any government, it is in the business of at least knowing the difference between right and wrong.

The knowledge of good and evil is a product of the Fall. When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they learned about good and evil. Even fallen, sinful people know about good and evil, and government upholds it. I don't like to say this, but you would be safer on the streets of Iran at night than you would be on the streets of Los Angeles. If you commit a crime in Iran, you wouldn't last very long. They at least know what crime is, and they deal with it. But that still doesn't mean we would want to live under that kind of a government.

Government serves to restrain evil. Even those governments that we wouldn't want to identify with or be subject to have some understanding of right and wrong.

Focusing on the Facts

1. What does Romans 12 say about the result of a Christian's relationship to God?
2. Why are Christians called to be model citizens?
3. Why do Christians need to live godly lives (1 Tim. 2:1-4)?
4. What should you do if you want peace in your society?
5. How can Christians best influence the world?
6. When Daniel had been commanded to eat the king's food, how was he able to remain obedient to God without being abrasive to the authorities (Dan. 1:12-13)?
7. How did Daniel treat the king when he knew intended to have him thrown into a den of lions (Dan. 6:21)?
8. Describe the pattern that Daniel sets for all Christians.
9. Explain what Paul meant by saying, "There is no power but of God" (Rom. 13:1).
10. Does God ordain communist governments? Explain your answer.
11. Why is resistance to government resistance against God?
12. What happens to those who resist the government (Rom. 13:2)?
13. Explain the methods of punishment in the Old Testament.
14. What were the objectives in the Old Testament methods of punishment?
15. What happens when crimes are not punished swiftly (Ecc. 8:11)?

Pondering the Principles

1. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-4. Do you pray for your governmental authorities at all, a little, or a lot? Do you pray for all the authorities over you, or do you just concentrate on the leader of your country? Set aside part of your prayer time to pray for your authorities, including your senators and representatives in both the federal and state government. Pray for your governor, mayor, and other elected officials in your city. Pray for your police department. You may even want to contact their offices to find out some of the specifics you could pray for. As you are faithful to pray, you will be fulfilling one of God's designs for your life.
2. When the government institutes a law that you disagree with, how do you respond? How should you respond if the law does not cause you to disobey God? What is to be your attitude in obeying your government? If you find yourself constantly questioning governmental decisions, perhaps you need to examine your attitude. Ask God to show you how your attitude to your government is lacking. Ask Him to convict you of those times when your attitude isn't what it should be. Finally, remember that a positive attitude to your government will reflect your obedience to God.

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