

Civil Government

*The role of government according to the Apostle Paul
as recorded in Romans chapter thirteen*

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Introduction

Mark 8:11-12 The P'rushim came and began arguing with him; they wanted him to give them a sign from Heaven, because they were out to trap him. With a sigh that came straight from his heart, he said, "Why does this generation want a sign? Yes! I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation!"

Mark 8:13-15 With that, he left them, got into the boat again and went off to the other side of the lake. Now the talmidim had forgotten to bring bread and had with them in the boat only one loaf. So when Yeshua said to them, "Watch out! Guard yourselves from the hametz (leaven) of the P'rushim and the hametz (leaven) of Herod,"

Herod was a prominent ruler in the secular government in Jesus day. Jesus had some strong words for him, or more accurately, his leaven. Leaven is a symbol for sin, and the way in which sin operates. It is the stuff that is so small, one barely takes notice, but has large ramifications.

Jesus did not say, "Swallow everything Herod says hook, line and sinker, because every authority has been established by God". But rather, He says, "Watch out! Guard yourselves". We are to be aware and not accept everything the government does and says. This analysis tests government action in light of the Word.

The method of this study is very straight forward. We look at the "theory" presented in 1 Timothy 2, Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2 where government's existence and taskings are directly described. Outside of these few verses, there are very few verses dealing with government from the "theory" angle. However, there is a great amount of recorded history on the acts of government officials. This provides an opportune environment to apply the theory. The application is very important, since the previously stated verses, speak in direct opposition to the standard world view describing the proper role of government. We shall discover that whenever government steps beyond its bounds staked out in the "theory" verses, destruction and injustice is the result, regardless of the (apparent) sincerity and good motives of the actors.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 admonishes us to pray "for all human beings, including kings and all in positions of prominence". We are to do this "so that we may lead quiet and peaceful lives, being godly and upright in everything". A prerequisite for leading quiet and peaceful lives lies in praying for those in secular authority. One may safely assume that the effectual prayer transforms the authority toward this end.

Leading quiet and peaceful lives must somehow be tied to prayer, provided that the prayer is directed. The directed prayer, however, must be guided by an understanding of what government is, what its job is, and how this job is accomplished. The best place to begin a study of government is Romans 13:1-7. In this chapter, government proper, and its god-given tasks, are demarcated.

When reading the passages pertaining to government, there are theoretically *two* methods of interpretation. The Bible tells us what government is, and the citizens' proper relationship to government - by direct statement and by historical account. Method 1: the standard teaching claims that all governments necessarily conform to the direct statements concerning government. Method 2: the not-so-standard version claims that the direct statements concerning government describe what true government is. That is to say that a government is measured by the statements. Should the organization in question fulfill the requirements, it is government, if not, it is not. The author takes the second method.

The basis for my view is the simple idea, "you shall know them by their fruits". It is silliness to insist that a lemon is an apple because we know the lemon came from an apple tree. It only makes sense to assume that the tree, from which the lemon came, is a lemon tree. When an organization does not match the government description found in the Bible, we know then that it is not government. Let us retreat to commonly held ground: either a prophet is for real, or he is false. We should not accept the false prophet as real just because he has a prophet packaging!

We have the ability, with the Word in our hand, not only to ascertain and judge actions of government, but also to take appropriate measures to encourage the good and stop the evil. This will be very important in the days and years to come. I am saddened by misplaced money and effort by Christians with sincere motives, but no knowledge. They are inadvertently promoting the devil's plan for government.

Some try to save the standard doctrine by mentioning that God may send us a "bad" government. This may be, but this is in no way plan A. The historical accounts recorded in the Bible show that God always encourages those in authority to perform their tasks correctly, and to refrain from evil. For the record, due to my studies I can say fully convinced that God does not send us evil governments, but rather allows the fruit of sin to work its effect - man allows, and encourages, government to become evil. Society reaps what it sows and receives the government it deserves.

A false government is not any more a true government than a false prophet is a true prophet.

What is government

Romans 13:1 Everyone is to obey the governing authorities. For there is no authority that is not from God, and the existing authorities have been placed where they are by God.

Romans 13:2 Therefore, whoever resists the authorities is resisting what God has instituted; and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

*Romans 13:3 **For rulers are no terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you like to be unafraid of the person in authority? Then simply do what is good, and you will win his approval;***

Romans 13:4 for he is God's servant, there for your benefit. But if you do what is wrong, be afraid! Because it is not for nothing that he holds the power of the sword; for he is God's servant, there as an avenger to punish wrongdoers.

Romans 13:5 Another reason to obey, besides fear of punishment, is for the sake of conscience.

Romans 13:6 This is also why you pay taxes; for the authorities are God's public officials, constantly attending to these duties.

Verse 4 from Romans 13 tells us that **government is God's servant.**

This servant expression is very vague. A prophet is likewise God's servant, but he is not an official in civil government. Like the prophet, the secular authority is granted tools to carry out his mission. This servant's tool, provided by God, is the sword. The sword can be generalized as a weapon for imposing harm. So we can say then, that the authority is one of God's "harm inflicting servants". We stress *one of*, for God can use more than earthly authorities to do harm. Weather storms come to mind.

Violence is in itself neutral - neither good nor bad. The use can, however, be good or evil. Not every organization wielding the power to inflict damage is good; and not every organization carrying the sword is government, at least not according to God's vision for government. It is wise to answer the following questions before making a judgment as to the authenticity of an organization calling itself government. One must ask, "**what should government do?**" and contrast that to "**what is government doing?**". Only then is one in a position where he can pray effectively for those in authority.

The author of Romans generalizes first when speaking of the taskings of government when he writes, "He is to be a benefit to you." The rulers do this in two ways.

- (1) The government servant instigates fear in those who do wrong.
He does this by using his power to inflict harm on wrong-doers.
- (2) The government servant gives approval to those doing good.

Peter repeats Paul's teaching on government in verse 14. This is our confidence that we are not pulling rabbits out of hats. We have two witnesses testifying the same facts.

1 Peter 2:13 For the sake of the Lord, submit yourselves to every human authority – whether to the emperor as being supreme,

1 Peter 2:14 or to governors as being sent by him to punish wrongdoers and praise those who do what is good.

1 Peter 2:15 For it is God's will that your doing good should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.

1 Peter 2:16 Submit as people who are free, but not letting your freedom serve as an excuse for evil; rather, submit as God's slaves.

1 Peter 2:17 Be respectful to all – keep loving the brotherhood, fearing God and honoring the emperor.

In a seemingly unrelated, at least at first glance, block of text found in Ephesians 6:11-12 and 17 we discover a few truths pertaining to government. Paul, in verses 11-12, discusses a conflict, while in verse 17 he mentions the sword. I make the connection between the Romans and Ephesians texts for the following reasons: in both instances the writer is the same (Paul), the topic is the same (conflict) and the commander is the same (God). In Hebrews 4:12 the Word of God is likened unto a two edged sword dividing between soul and spirit. It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Between these two pieces of text we can justly claim that the authorities must be able to judge the thoughts and attitudes of the heart, and uncover the truth. Solomon's wisdom in determining the true mother of the disputed baby is a perfect example of this. At this point, we have a double meaning for the term "sword". Beyond the literal damage inflicting weapon, we also have the ability to uncover Truth. A government not interested in truth has no mandate from God.

The basis, however, is the Word of God - whether written or spoken. The Original Testament is full of examples where authorities

inquired the Prophets for the spoken Word, and the priest for the written Word. Without the written and spoken Word, governments are ships without rudders, thrown about after every wind and wave - or more accurately described, by fleshly desires (usually for money and raw power).

In the verses leading up to Romans 13, that is the last half of Romans 12, we obtain the reason for government. The last half of Romans 12 basically says that we are not to right a wrong on our own account. This leads the author into chapter 13 teaching on government. Government takes care of the the job of taking revenge.

The reason for this is simple. What happens when everyone takes the task of revenge into his own hands? Anarchy is the result. Government acts as a mediator between two parties. When judging in righteousness, peace covers the land.

As one can see, it is very important that government provide its services faithfully. Summing up we say then that true government

- (1) is God's servant
- (2) who carries a sword
- (3) in order to punish wrong-doers
- (4) as an agency of revenge
- (5) so that we may live peaceful lives.

Violence against whom?

Government only has one tool, and that is the sword. This requires that all acts of government are accompanied with violence, or the threat thereof. *It can do nothing without violence.* This is a very important concept to understand. If not, one is very easily hoodwinked by supposed good government programs, and tricked into supporting them. This is the core of the author's message.

A matrix has been provided to help graphically explain my point. **All government action and inaction must fall into one of the 4 fields.**

<i>Government action</i>	<i>wrong-doers</i>	<i>non-wrong-doers</i>
Use of violence against	+	-
Withholding use of violence against	-	+

According to the Apostle Paul, violence must be used against wrong-doers, but must be withheld from those not doing wrong. Although he did not explicitly state this in its entirety, it is inconceivable that Paul ment that government should harm evil-doers and non-evil-doers alike. Similarly, it is foolish to interpret out of his

writings that the government should not harm non-evil-doers, or evil-doers either.

It is usually clear that injustice is served when a criminal is not punished. What is, however, difficult to perceive is this: if government is providing a service, but not using violence against a wrong-doer, then it is without a doubt, or discussion, using violence against a non-wrong-doer. The matrix above does not allow for anything else.

The deception is so subtle that very few can discern it, for the aggressive violence is cleverly concealed.

The devil's form of government

Logically, a government in God's eyes becomes a legal government *only* when it acts according to His definition of government - as found in Romans 13 and elsewhere. Organizations of violence calling themselves governments, but not meeting God's criteria are not governments, since all true governments are installed by Him for His prescribed tasks.

Only a mind operating in the realm of insanity would claim that God's servant is the one who acts independent of what God demands. God's servant by definition serves the will of God. Those not walking according to God's will are not His servants.

The devil also has his version of government. It should not surprise us to learn that his government has the opposite taskings compared to God's. False authorities honor those who do evil, and punish those who do good. They pursue to fill society with violence instead of peace.

Christians in politics

1 Timothy 2:1-2 informs us that God's People are to pray for those in authority. The act of prayer is done in the hope that the target of one's prayer will be altered. So it is clear from this verse that the Christian is to become involved in politics, even if he does not run for office and send letters to those in power. In reality, one could effectively argue that one's resources are better spent in prayer and fasting as opposed to physically trying to start a career in politics.

The parallel

The study of secular government is at the same time the study of Church government. The Church, as the spiritual authority, sets the stage for what the secular government is allowed, and not allowed,

to do. Therefore, the corruption we will encounter and lay bare for all to see in secular government is only a mirror of the sin present in the Church. The Church then has no power to correct the sin of secular government in prayer, for it ignores the log in its own eye.

When we recognize the fraud in secular government, we must realize the root of such is the same pervertedness in the Church. The Unprincipled actions tainting the leaders of both kingdoms run in exact parallels. The lies, the methodology and justifications are exactly one to one the same. Those who are paying attention shall see the symmetry very easily. Those who are taken in by religious systems will not.

Submission

The open question arises. Does God require us to submit to a false authority? The author has not come to a complete conclusion at this point.

What to do?

What to do when you discover you live under a government that is a false minister? You pray for it to change. The chances are good that you are paying taxes at the point of a gun for services not rendered, and for services having nothing to do with its calling. Before God's throne, you have a right to (1) demand back payment for stolen wealth and (2) that you become freed from the oppressor. However, I have found in the Bible two answers to this type of prayer.

- (1) I, Adonai, will send a deliverer.
- (2) You are living under these circumstances because of your (forefather's) sin. Get used to it.

It must be said that I am unaware of any delivery from ungodly government subjugation without God's people crying out for justice.

To summarize

Even though Paul's thoughts on politics were simple, they seem very accurate and correct. It is hard to overstate the fact that government only has two jobs. One is to punish wrong-doers, and two is to approve of those doing good. It is easy to imagine that the vast majority of resources should be spent on task one.

Remember that government is a sword carrying operation. In every action, it must harm. If it is not harming wrong-dowers, then it is harming those not doing wrong. It is the Christian's job to ensure the government is using its power to inflict damage on the correct persons. Noone else will.

That being said, the only legal agencies of the government are the military, the police, the courts and their support functions. Everything else goes beyond what the Bible teaches.

Specifically, it is not the job of government to "manage the economy", for it does not know the times for investing, or harvesting. It cannot feed the poor, for it is not a farm. It cannot educate our children with a threat of punishment, and it certainly cannot heal the sick with a double-edged sword. Muscling itself into non-violent economic production through the use violence is very destructive. It is also stealing. Asking government to perform, or just regulate, non-violence related services is likened unto having a boot captain fly a passenger plane. It does not work, and yes, it will crash.

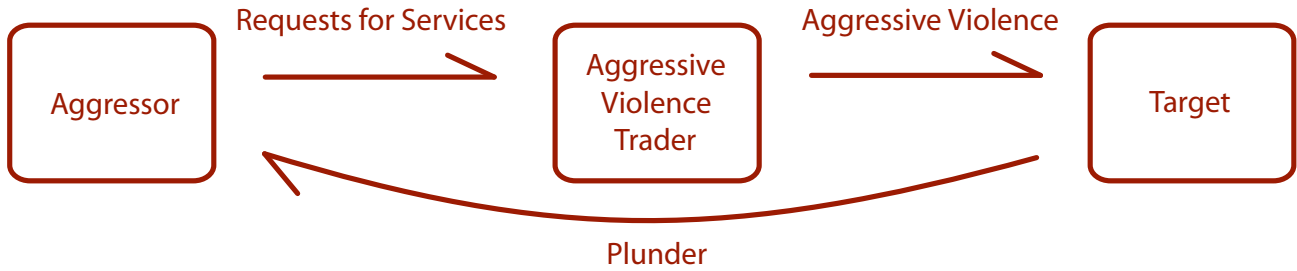
This should be obvious. At the same time, it goes against everything taught and believed the world over by the elite and the masses alike. For the Devil is a master of packaging "social services" to appear good, or even "Christian", while the truth is anything but. The anti-christ will be well versed with the same tactics. If we are not being aware, we will be swept away as well with his smooth words.

To tidy this idea in an easy to understand manner, the author presents two graphics. The first represents Paul's version of government, while the second illustrates the world's variety.

Keep in mind that Paul has equated government with a service provider. They sell services, and then they are duly paid for them. In God's opinion, the government is to sell defensive violence to citizens against aggressors.



As one can expect, the world does things differently. See the next illustration.



In this construction, the players are the same, but the roles are exchanged. The aggressor is now doing the purchasing of violence, where the citizen is now the target of violence. The goal is to transfer plunder from the citizen to the interest group. The government facilitates the transfer of wealth from the victim to the buyer through violence - usually in the form of money, or free services bought with money expropriated from the target. Themes like education, medical care and pension checks, among others, are perfect examples.

These simple graphics are of great importance for those who desire to see justice and peace rule in their land. Violence is the opposite of peace. One cannot rationally expect the government to be busy in every nook and cranny of daily life and still have peace. Every single policy known to man, from the greatest to the smallest, can be investigated as either defensive or aggressive. There is no other option - this is probably the most difficult idea to grapple with and accept. It does not sit well, because we have been taught the exact opposite from the earliest years, that is that if we want peace and security, "government should do something about XYZ".

When one listens to the sound bites espousing from the campaign trail jockeying for public support, approximately 100% of the airtime centers on "who should control, and who should consume, which resources". Should one consider this abstract thought for a second, it does not take long for the reader to know that these campaign gimmicks are selling the world government system, in other words the sales pitch is mammon. If mammon is their god, then theft is not far. Take another look at my second graphic above.

The message is, "if you vote for me, you will have more money in your pocket, a better school system for the kids, more reliable medical care and a secure pension for the parents".

The Bible, however as the lone voice in the wilderness, demands that

aspiring politicians *only* deserve the office of governance *if* they punish the wrong doer; for anything else is government conspired plundering. When is the last time the reader read in the newspaper, "If you vote for me, the thief will pay back seven times, the murder sentenced to death and the liar chastised".

When one understands this concept, he then realizes the great jeopardy in which we find ourselves. It is, to be brutally honest, scary. The average civilian has no hope of ever being able to judge if a government is performing to God's calling.

Government's nature is terror and violence. It is to be a terror to those committing acts of aggressive violence, for this is the only language the violent comprehend. Defensive violence is government's divine calling, and duty. But why are citizens aggressively violent? What is the mechanism? The clear and cut answer is found here.

James 4:1-3 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

The violence begins at a very early age, as any parent will attest. If the child does not get what it wants, it begins to scream, yell, throw things - including himself - on the floor, kick, hit, scratch, etc. It is the built-in sinful nature of man to become violent with the intent of obtaining what he covets. The deal is simple, either give me what I want, or I will make life unbearable. It is the mafia tactic in its purist form.

The violence is limited only by the imagination and capabilities of the person. A toddler is relatively harmless. But as the child grows stronger in body and intellect, he can become extremely dangerous. What starts as a temper tantrum in diapers goes through fist fights at school, cheating in business, corruption in politics and at the apex, war between nations.

The "genius" of Carl Marx was to bring the reader to a place of covetousness such that he would explode in angry fury against all those possessing wealth. He gave them "justifications" to kill, steal and destroy. This is the bottom line in his writings: an appellation to the fleshly nature of man, that is greed, envy, lust for consumption, hate and so forth.

But unlike Marx, God has called us to control the violent nature that wants to enslave us. If man did not have a tendency to become

violent, there would be no need for government to protect the victims. Alternatively, the more violent the citizens in society are, the bigger government becomes. So we can say then that the size of government meddling in citizens' affairs is then equal to the lack of self control, or lack of maturity, in society. We then become slaves of government, because we reap what we sow. If we choose to be slaves to violence by yielding to it, then slaves we will be.

Since the government is manned by citizens, it only makes sense that if the citizens lack self control, the government officials will too. Is it any wonder that politics through the ages have centered on "who gets what" as opposed to "punishing the evil-doers"? Violence is part and parcel of the flesh. It wants what it wants, when it wants. Violence is a great tool for attaining those things we want to consume. The more violence, the more one is able to consume. Since government represents the monopoly of violence in a political jurisdiction, whosoever can control it can make off with great amounts of loot. The temptation for most citizenry is simply too much. This is what man's version of government is all about.

Man typically reacts to his surroundings. If the spoils of war are small and the costs are great, he refrains from it. But when the promise of loot becomes large, and the risks are small, then we have a much different situation. This is what government represents. A man, who has been honest all his life is suddenly, as a civil servant, confronted with a temptation that only the very strongest can resist.

When we support someone for a place in government, we are giving them great power. We should not give just anyone a gun, much less make him commander and chief of the armed forces. Does the person have the character to resist the temptation of using this power for personal gain, or gain for his friends and supports? One has to look far and wide to find such a man.

When a fleshly politician bids for votes, he tells the public what it wants to hear. "If you vote for me, you will get what you want". He neglects telling us from whom he is going to steal to pay for it. A successful politician is skilled at getting the interest groups what they want, if only in appearances, which is usually all it amounts to, and of course, extracting money from others to pay for it. Now is an opportune time to glance back at my second graphic.

From this point on, we shall look at the Bible as a historical source of government action. The reader shall quickly notice that the same tricks and arguments are utilized in modern times. In addition, we shall critically examine standard policies of our day,

and tear them apart. The policies bring about the exact opposite of the stated goals, because they are lies. And the proponents of said policies know they are lies. The officials are only feeding our fleshly wants. This is why God desires that we stay away from them.

Government influences us for the better, or for worse. Government is a mirror of the soul of the nation, or what we and our forefathers have invested into it. It is time that we begin to push governance back to its true calling, and away from being a hapless tool for the common crook.