

Thanking God for The Secular Government

Text

Romans 13:1-17 ¹Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

³For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practises evil. ⁵Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.

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Memory Verse

Rom. 13:3 (NIV) *For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended.*

Introduction

To govern means to guide and direct through authorized institutions. Where there is no law, there is no order. Where there is no order, there is no government. And where there is no government, society breaks down.

Government is a blessing when both the leaders and the people live by fair rules. The government of heaven, extended to earth through Christ and His Church, is the perfect model for every secular government.

Objective

To see the blessings that come with having government, and what is lost when there is anarchy.

Presentation

1. Government is a Unifying Force

People can only pool their resources - human and natural - effectively under a central system called government.

That is how you get harmony in daily life and in business, so that everyone can benefit.

Gen. 11:1-9 shows what happens when people unite against God.

But when government functions under God's order, it creates stability for work, trade, and community life.

2. Government Provides the Blessing of Restraint

With government in place, people with evil intentions can be restrained. That authority exists for the good of peace-loving people.

That is why God tells us to pray for the government in power (1 Tim. 2:1-4).

Have you been praying sincerely for your federal, state, and local leaders, or have you been speaking against them instead? Prayer gives God room to work through them.

3. Government Brings the Blessing of Promotion and Empowerment

When law and order are enforced, those who do good are protected and promoted (Rom. 13:3).

Civil authorities are allowed by God to distribute material resources fairly through laws that meet real needs. In the same way, the Church is placed by God to share spiritual resources - the more important, eternal ones - through Christ's teaching (Eph. 1:13-14; 2:17-19; 3:6).

Anyone in the world who does not trust what Jesus teaches is poor in the truest sense. That is the "poverty in spirit" Jesus mentioned in Matt. 5:3. That is the real hunger Scripture talks about (Matt. 5:6).

Conclusion

Government is not perfect, but it is a gift from God to keep society from collapsing into chaos. When it functions well, it restrains evil, promotes good, and creates room for both material and spiritual life to flourish. That is why we thank God for it.

Evaluation Questions & Answers

1. Considering the effects of anarchy and governance, what are two merits of a government?
 - (1) Unity and coordination. Government allows people to pool resources and work together for common good.
 - (2) Restraint of evil. Government holds back those with harmful intentions so that peace-loving people can live safely (Rom. 13:4).
2. What makes an individual a part of an extant government?
 - * Living under its laws, participating in its civic life, and submitting to its authority, as long as it does not contradict God's commands (Rom. 13:1-2). You are part of it by being a resident and subject to its rule.
3. Who are the givers of power to those in authority after God?
 - * The people. God establishes authority, but He works through people to place leaders in power. That is why we are told to pray for them and respect their office. (Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-14).

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4. Why should we pray for our government?
- * Because prayer invites God to guide leaders so that we can live peaceful and godly lives. (1 Tim. 2:1-2). Praying for government is obeying God and caring for the good of everyone under that government.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of government. Give us a spirit of loyalty and teach us to pray consistently for our leaders at every level. Remind us that no authority exists apart from Your permission. Help us to live as good citizens and faithful disciples of Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Amen.