



Today's Message

Date: September 24, 2023
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Civil Government Ordained by God*

Text: Romans 13:1-7

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷ Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Introduction: Baptists have always insisted that the Bible teaches the separation of church and state. By this they mean that government cannot interfere with the affairs of the church. That does not mean, however, that they promote anarchy. The 24th article of the Baptist Confession of Faith explains the biblical view of civil government. It is a timely subject for our chaotic times.

Today's take-home truth: We are citizens of heaven; we honor the King who rules *there* as we honor the kings he appoints to rule *here*.

I. God establishes civil governors according to his sovereign plan. 1-2

- A. All civil governments exist by God's design. 1
- B. To disobey civil government is to disobey God. 2

II. God uses civil governors to accomplish his good purposes. 3-4

- A. He uses them to provide society with good. 3
- B. He uses them to protect society from chaos. 4

II. God requires his children to submit to Him by submitting to civil governors. 5-7

- A. We must obey them. 5
 - 1. Obey them for the sake of conscience.
 - 2. Disobey them *only* when they require disobedience to Christ. Cf. Acts 5:29
- B. We must pay taxes to them. 6
- C. We must respect and honor them. 7
- D. We must pray for them. Cf. 1 Timothy 2:1-4