

“I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior” (1 PETER 2:1–3).

GOVERNMENT

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS:

Often, as we watch politicians make statements at events, on TV or on social media, we are left to wonder if the best course might be just to send them all home. It's easy to grow weary of how government operates and how at times it seems incapable of the simplest task. So, should we just do away with government? Can't we simply just ignore what it says? Is there any good in government, anyway? Well, while we can certainly have concerns about what the government is doing and also question whether those serving are doing the best job, we can never forget this: It is God who gave us government.

Yes, God gave us government for our good. He gave us government in order that evil would be punished and good rewarded among us. Government is given to serve those under its authority precisely by doing the work given to it.

Government does not always do this job well, but this does not mean that we should speak ill of the gift of government God has ordained. We should instead, in the capacity we have as citizens in our particular country, seek to remind our government of its purpose and encourage people that understand this principle to serve in public office.

Christians should not promote anarchy or lawlessness. That is not in accord with how God has ordered his world. It is not good for us. We should instead speak truth, act in our capacity as citizens and be ever-prayerful for our government leaders. Whether they know it or not, they have their authority only because God has allowed it. The answer to bad government is not to rid ourselves of government, but to pray for and aid good government — that which punishes evil and rewards good.

For the times we have diminished the good gift of government, we must repent. Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords, has promised to forgive us as we do. He truly gives us everything we need for body and soul. Amen.

SCRIPTURES:

1 Peter 2:13–14

“Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.”

John 19:11

“Jesus answered him [Pontius Pilate], ‘You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.’”

Romans 13:1–4

“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. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For 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, 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.”

CONVERSATION POINTS:

- What would the world be like if no one were given the task of punishing evil?
- Is our government currently carrying out its role well?
- What could we do as citizens to help, still giving all respect due to those who are in authority?