

INCLUDED

A JOURNEY THROUGH ROMANS



The New International Version translation is used for the questions.

1. Read Romans 13:1-14. According to this passage, where did the idea of civil government come from? What are government officials called and what are we to do in regard to them? Do you think there is ever a time when, as a Christian, it is okay to disobey what the government tells us to do? Do you think God has any interest in what our government does or doesn't do?
2. According to Pastor Rick, what is the first purpose of government? How do we know? Read Genesis 9:5,6. This is the first time in the Bible that God gave man power to control the actions of other men, what was the command? What does this reveal about what God values most, since this is the first command to human government?
3. What is the second purpose of government? Read Exodus 20:14-17. Does this passage have anything to do with personal property rights? In what way? Does the fact that God protects the right to private property in the 10 commandments indicate that he expects government to do the same?
4. What is the third purpose of government? What part of government fulfills this purpose? Read Deuteronomy 16:18-20. What instructions did God give to the judges in Israel? Do you think this means that God expects all judicial systems in all governments to do the same? Some people claim that government should guarantee fairness for all of its citizens, what does that mean? Is God fair?
5. What is the fourth purpose of government? Since we live in America, discuss how you think the American government is doing in regard to the four purposes for government. Has it changed over time?
6. Pastor Rick said that as Christians, we have dual citizenship, what are they? When the requirements of our two citizenships are in conflict, what should we do? Read Acts 5:29-40. What happened to the apostles as a result of their choice to ignore their governing leaders and follow God's command? What should we learn from that? What ultimately happened to 11 of the 12 apostles as a result of their disobedience to their civil government?
7. Pastor Rick said there are six things we should do to make the rest of our life the best of our life. List the six things and talk about what each one means.

ANSWERS

1. *The idea of civil government came from God and began immediately after the flood of Noah. Government officials are called God's ministers of justice in this passage and we are to obey what they tell us to do as long as they function and perform the role God has defined for government. If the government ever tells us to do something that God says is wrong or not to do something that God says is right, we should disobey them. God is very concerned with what government does because he created it, in spite of the "separation of church and state" in America.*
2. *The first role of government is to protect human life. God shows us how much he values human life in that the very first time God gave humans permission to control the behavior of other humans was in Genesis 9 when he instituted capital punishment for murderers. Life is given by God and he is the only one who can give permission to take another human life. This is why our constitution says we have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*
3. *The second role government is to play is to provide for personal and property rights. In the 10 commandments God said not to commit adultery (steal another person's spouse), lie about your neighbor (steal their integrity), do not covet your neighbor's possessions (steal their property). When God created our mind and body, he gave us the right to own whatever we can produce with our mind and body, which is the basis of "Thou shalt not steal". Neither individuals or by extension governments should steal private property.*
4. *The third purpose of government is to resolve disputes between people, which is what a judicial system is for. In Deuteronomy 16, God told the judges that were appointed in Israel to administer justice equally and not pervert it.. They were to treat everyone the same and not to take bribes, which would be unjust.*
5. *The fourth purpose for government is to punish those who break the law so that they suffered consequences. Romans 13:4 says that if you break the law, you should be afraid because God gave government "a sword" which represents their power to punish lawbreakers.*
6. *We are citizens of the community we live in on earth but also we are citizens of heaven as believers. When God's requirements conflict with our communities' requirements, we should always fulfill God's requirements, even if it means disobeying our government's requirements. In Acts 5, as a result of disobeying the ruler's command not to preach in the name of Jesus, the apostles received a beating from the authorities. We need to understand that when we obey God and disobey our government authorities, God does not promise to deliver us from whatever punishment our authorities hand out to us. In fact, as a result of obeying God and not obeying their government, all of the apostles except John were put to death eventually.*
7. *The six things are: a. Pay Up, which means always pay any debt that you incur; b. Build Up, which means to always encourage others, don't tear them down with your words; c. Wake Up, which means to always use your time in a wise manner, don't waste it; d. Gear Up, which means to put on God's armor and be effective in the spiritual battle that is going on around us; e. Clean Up, which means to put off the sinful practices that you engage in and allow the Holy Spirit to control you; and f. Dress Up which means to clothe ourselves with the attitude that we are going to think and act like Jesus.*

