

“Good Citizens”
Romans 13:1-7
5/14/23
Message 25

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Good Citizens”

- **Now the word Citizens Means**

- A native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it
- An inhabitant of a particular town or city.

- **As the Followers of Christ**

- **We are citizens of the Kingdom of God**
 - As Such - We have both Rights & Responsibilities
 - Jesus is our King –
 - He is to have unconditional loyalty & obedience
 - Our first responsibility is to CHRIST - HEAVEN
 - We must never forget
 - That this world is not our home

1 Peter 2:11 (NKJV)

11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

- We are headed home
- We need to be heavenly minded
- Our primary focus here

- To be the BEST Christ Followers we can be
- To preach the Word (share the Gospel)
- To Disciple Souls for Christ
- This Attitude will keep us and make us the BEST Citizen
- **Now We Are also Citizens of the United States of America**
 - This earthly citizenship carries its own Rights & Responsibilities
 - **1st Our System of Government**
 - In order to understand our Responsibilities and Rights
 - We must understand what type of Government we have
 - 1st America Was Founded On Christian Principles
 - 1st God Is Creator
 - 2nd God Is Sustainer
 - 3rd Man has Fallen – SINNED
 - 4th God's Word is the Final Authority
 - Now Sadly All these pillars have fallen
 - More on this as we go through the message
 - 2nd We Live a Constitutional Republic
 - Means – A constitutional republic is a state where the chief executive and representatives are

elected, **and the rules are set down in a written constitution.**

- “We The People” - We are the rightful masters of this nation
- We are governed by a system of laws Constitution / Bill of Rights
- We then elect people in our nation to **REPRESENT US NOT to RULE OVER US – We throw away the king 245 years ago**
- Therefore, we can fire them if they lead us down a road to evil
- Our first submission to the Constitution not to men
- If men violate the Constitution, it is our responsibility to remove them from office

○ **Show Pic**

- This DOES NOT mean we are not respectful of men but we have a responsibility to do something
- We are NOT under a Nero – at least not yet

- Now Sadly –

- Our nation has lost touch with this reality
- So how do we go forward?

- **3rd So What are the Believers Responsibilities**

- 1st CHRIST – GOSPEL FIRST

- We are His Ambassadors

- 2nd As Long as the Constitution is in place –

- This will affect how we live out the details
- 3rd If we were under Nero –
 - Different way of dealing with it
- 4th We CAN and MUST live Victoriously –
 - No matter what the system of government is
 - A Republic
 - A Democracy
 - A Monarchy
 - Or even a totalitarian regime
 - Examples in China
- Romans 13 Tells us how to live out our Faith and how to be Good Citizens

• **Review**

- **Context is still Romans 12**
 - As the followers of Christ
 - We're called to moral excellence.
 - We're called to virtue (Holiness) because we don't just know what Truth is, we know Truth Himself.
 - Romans 1-11 = DOCTRINE
 - Romans 12 = DUTY
 - Doctrine = DUTY

- How we need to live our lives in light of ALL that He has done for us
- By the Way – Not to be super heavy
 - What we have been learning about –
 - IS NOT AN OPTION – maybe I will, maybe I should, NO it is a MUST
 - This is why is BEGGING (Beseech) them v. 1
- **We outlined Chapter 12**
 - Total Commitment To Jesus vs. 1-2
 - Total Commitment To The Body Of Christ vs. 3-8
 - Total Commitment To LOVE vs. 9-21
- **Another way to look at this amazing chapter**
 - **Romans 12:1**
 - In Light of Romans 1-11
 - Were to be a LIVING Sacrifice
 - The rest of the chapter instructs on HOW to do that
 - **Romans 12:2**
 - NOT Conformed But Renewed
 - **Romans 12:3**
 - Right Attitude about yourself
 - **Romans 12:4-5**

- You are now a part of His Body – Every Part does it's share

- **Romans 12:6-8**

- Use your gift for the glory of God and to build His Body

- **Romans 12:9-21**

- LOVE / Love the Body / Love the World

- **Let's Look at 3 Powerful Truths about being a Good Citizen**

- Good Citizens For God's Sake vs. 1-2
- Good Citizens For Your Own Sake vs. 3-4
- Good Citizens For Conscience Sake vs. 5-7

Good Citizens For God's Sake vs. 1-2

- **First: Every Soul Be Subject v. 1 a**

Romans 13:1 (NKJV)

1 Let 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.

- **1st Every Soul Be Subject to Governing Authorities**

- This certainly includes Christians!

- Paul simply says that we should be subject to the governing authorities.
- Every SOUL = Every SOUL
- We NEED to Respect Authority

- Governing Authorities –

- Greek: Exousia –

- Means:
 - Power; the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed

- Be Subject -

- Greek: Hupotasso

- Means:

- (“under” + “to put in order”) – to arrange under, obey; to submit to one’s control
- In the ancient Greek military it meant
 - “To arrange troops in a military fashion under the command of a leader”.
- In non-military use
 - It was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden”.

- **2nd Lessons**

- **1st Subject / Submission to Authority**

- One of the BIGGEST problems we face today in America
 - NO one wants to SUBMIT to Authority
 - Examples we see in our culture
 - No Submission to Police
 - No Submission to Teachers
 - No Submission to Laws

- We have an Epidemic of not submitting
- Examples on Submission in Scripture

- **1st We are to submit to each other**

Ephesians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 submitting to one another in the fear of God.

- **2nd We are to submit to our employers**

1 Peter 2:18 (NKJV)

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.

- Weather good or bad employers
 - There must be order in the work place
- Don't like your employer –
 - Pray about leaving
- DON'T BLOW YOUR WITNESS for Christ by tearing down your employer
- **3rd Wives are to submit to their Husbands**

Ephesians 5:22 (NKJV)

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

- Order in the Family
 - Christ (Head)
 - Husband
 - Wife
 - Children

- 4th Children Obey your Parents

Ephesians 6:1–2 (NKJV)

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
2 “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise:

- 5th Yes - Submit to the government (as in Romans 13:1)

1 Peter 2:13 (NKJV)

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,

- 6th We are to submit to our Elders

1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

- 7th Submit to Leaders in the Church

Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)

17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

- 2nd Submission's LIMITS

- There is a limit to submission

- 1st The Government cannot ask us to go against God
 - Yet some follow the government where every it goes
- 2nd There are times We NEED to stand UP

- There are TIMES when no matter the cost we must stand up against EVIL
- A good portion of Church in Germany before and during WW 2
 - Buried it's head to the evil of Hitler
 - Some Christians used Romans 13 in Nazi Germany despite Germany - Treatment of the Jews
- We Must stand for Righteousness
- So there are LIMITS to our submission to Human Authority
 - **1st If Violate God's Word**
 - 1st Apostle - When told not to share the Gospel (Acts 5)

Acts 5:28–29 (NKJV)

28 saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

- The command of God always takes precedence over the command of government. There are no exceptions.
- 2nd Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah
 - Bow to the Neb's false god
- 3rd The First Church
 - The worship of the Emperor was mandatory

- Each year a Roman citizen had to burn a pinch of incense on the alter and to acknowledge publicly that Caesar was supreme Lord
 - Christian would not sprinkle the dust to worship Caesar
 - So - because they would bow the knee to Caesar or Nero
 - Thrown into the Lions
- **2nd When asked to do an immoral act**
 - Ethical areas in which many are constantly asked to compromise—
 - For example
 - Falsifying records for “security reasons”
 - Perjury for the sake of the department
 - Covering for subordinates by means of falsehoods.
 - Christians must never think it is okay to commit immoral or unethical acts simply because the state has requested it.
- **3rd Never go against your Christian conscience**
 - Believers must never sin against their conscience.
 - Believers **MUST** never vote for or support anyone who support and promotes sin

- **Second: Understand Where Authority Comes From v. 1b**

Romans 13:1 (NKJV)

1 Let 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.*

- **1st All authority ultimately comes from God.**
 - God is the sovereign ruler of the universe.
 - God is the source of all authority.
 - *MacDonald; “In every ordered society there must be authority and submission to that authority. Otherwise you have a state of anarchy, and you cannot survive indefinitely under anarchy. Any government is better than no government. So God has instituted human government, and no government exists apart from His will. This does not mean that He approves of all that human rulers do. He certainly does not approve of corruption, brutality, and tyranny! But the fact remains that the authorities that exist are appointed by God.”*
 - You know what this means?!
 - That NO matter how you feel about the last election
 - Stole are not stolen
 - Mr. Biden is our President
 - God raises up and takes down leaders
 - Why the representatives we have
 - 1st Judgment
 - 2nd Wake the Church up
 - 3rd Bring America to repentance

Proverbs 29:2 (NKJV)

2 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.

• **Third: Therefore Whoever Resists v. 2**

Romans 13:2 (NKJV)

2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

○ **1st Resists the Ordinance of God**

- God's desire is for there to be order.
- He has "appointed" that there be order.
- If you are working "against" the authority over you (resist), then you're actually working against God.
- We need to put ourselves "under" authority for things to flow correctly.
- MacDonald; And yet it still holds that anyone who disobeys or rebels against the government is disobeying and rebelling against what God has ordained. Whoever resists lawful authority earns and deserves punishment.

○ **2nd Lesson**

- Warning against rebellion.
- God is the one who put that person in authority over you, then when you decide to line up against that person, you're lining up against God.
- Our first obligation is to God – Then man

Good Citizens For Your Own Sake vs. 3-4

• **First: For Rulers Are Not A Terror To Good Works v. 3**

Romans 13:3 (NKJV)

3 *For 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.*

- **1st Not A Terror to Good Works BUT to EVIL**
 - If you are doing the right things,
 - Obeying the law
 - Doing good works
 - You should not be afraid of those in authority.
 - If you are breaking the law,
 - Then you're always looking over your shoulder.
 - If you're driving the speed limit, are you afraid when you drive past a Highway Patrol car? No.
- **2nd Lesson**
 - Christians should be the best citizens of all.
 - Even though they are loyal to God before they are loyal to the state, Christians are good citizens
 - Why?
 - Because we're honest
 - Give no trouble to the state
 - We pay our taxes
 - Most importantly – pray for the state and the rulers.

- **Second: For He Is God Minister v. 4**

Romans 13:4 (NKJV)

4 For 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 practices evil.

- **1st He is God's minister**

- Paul describes government officials as God's minister (Servant)
- They have a ministry in the plan and administration of God, just as much as church leaders do.

- **2nd An avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil:**

- They have a duty to punish those who are doing EVIL
- When a government fails to do this consistently,
 - It opens itself up to God's judgment and correction.

- **3rd He does not bear the sword in vain:**

- The sword is a reference to capital punishment.
 - In the Roman Empire, criminals were typically executed by beheading with a sword (crucifixion was reserved for the worst criminals of the lowest classes).
 - Paul, speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has no doubt that the state has the legitimate authority to execute criminals.
- Death Penalty is BIBLICAL
 - God Established the death penalty in (Gen 9:6)

Genesis 9:6 (NKJV)

6 *“Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.*

Good Citizens For Conscience Sake vs. 5-7

• First: Therefore You Must Be Subject v. 5

Romans 13:5 (NKJV)

5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience’ sake.

○ **1st Two reasons for obeying the government:**

- 1st FEAR - You won’t experience “wrath” (you don’t get a ticket)
- 2nd Your own Conscience –
 - Defined - An inner feeling or voice viewed as acting as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behavior.
 - That either accuses or excuses what you are doing
 - So we are to Submit do good for our own Conscience sake

• Second: Pay YOUR Taxes v. 6

Romans 13:6 (NKJV)

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing.

○ **1st You pay Taxes**

- Jesus endorsed paying your taxes:

Matthew 22:17–21 (NKJV)

17 Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, you hypocrites?”

19 *Show Me the tax money.*” So they brought Him a denarius.

20 And He said to them, *“Whose image and inscription is this?”*

21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” And He said to them, *“Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”*

- Submission leads to paying taxes
- Paying our taxes shows our submission to the government.
- But you don’t have to over pay

• **Third: Render Therefore To All their Due v. 7**

Romans 13:7 (NKJV)

7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

- **1st Render to ALL**
 - Pay all Taxes & Customs
 - Taxes income, their real estate, and their personal property.
 - Customs on merchandise being transported from one country to another.
- **2nd Fear to Whom Fear Honor to Whom Honor**
 - God demands that we show sincere respect and high esteem for all public officials.
 - Even when we have a hard time respecting a person, we MUST respect the position

Practical Advice For Believers

• **The Christian Responsibility**

- LIVE Righteously – Live For God
- Stay in the Word –

- Many so-called Christians are falling for the worlds lies
- Share The Gospel
- Stand for Righteousness
- PRAY for those in Public Office
- Make sure you have Biblical Worldview
 - Means We see everything in the world through the lens of God's Word
 - I like how Jack Hibbs puts it
 - It is important to remember that a worldview is comprehensive. It affects every area of life, from money to morality, from politics to art. True Christianity is more than a set of ideas to use at church. Christianity as taught in the Bible is itself a worldview. The Bible never distinguishes between a "religious" and a "secular" life; the Christian life is the only life there is. Jesus proclaimed Himself "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) and, in doing so, became our worldview.
 - First, God says that He is the Creator and Inventor of natural marriage between a man and a woman. Thus, as a Christian, I must vote for the candidate that has a voting record that is the closest to the biblical worldview of defending traditional marriage if I am going to be in agreement with God.
 - Second, God says that He is the Creator and Defender of life. He holds every one of us responsible for protecting defenseless pre-born children. Thus, as a Christian, I must vote for the candidate that has a voting record that is the closest to the biblical worldview of Pro-Life if I am going to be in agreement with God.

- Third, God says that He is the Creator and Sustainer of the Jews, Jerusalem and Israel's right to their land. Thus, as a Christian, I must vote for the candidate that has a voting record that is the closest to the biblical worldview of supporting Israel if I am going to be in agreement with God.
- In a Constitutional Republic
 - Vote
 - *Charles Finney; "Politics are a part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to their country as a part of their duty to God. God will bless or curse this nation according to the course Christians take in politics."*
 - *President Abraham Lincoln; "The ballot is stronger than the bullet."*
 - *Hibbs; "Voting is how our nation remains secure. But what concerns me today are not the political pundits, ranting liberals or the media conflagration that saturates our websites and television. What deeply concerns me is the lack of knowledge, understanding, and apathy that describes the Christian today. This disengagement among Christians from their culture is eerily similar to the time of Hitler's advance. The church at that time, for the most part, was silent and too polite to stand against tyrannical tendencies. By doing so, they sacrificed their convictions on the altar of tolerance and manners. The German church, along with the churches of Europe, kept up their attendance, sang their worship songs, and read their Bibles, yet failed terribly to stop one man's satanic march of Nazism. Keep in mind that while the churches were large and well attended, approximately eleven million people (mostly Jews, many Christians, and thousands of homosexuals) were carted off to death camps in the name of political correctness. The church had become miserably irrelevant by not shining its light*

nor sounding the trumpet. Could this same historical apathy be strangling the heart of the church today?

- Run for office

- We have made an impact in our county – School Board

Closing

- My we as Christians be the best citizens
- Let us pray for all those in public office

Communion

- First: Remember (Looking Back at what Jesus did)
- Second: Repent / Reflect (Looking Within) 1 Cor. 11:27-28
- Third: Rejoice (Looking Forward) 1 Cor. 11:26
- Fourth: Reconcile (Looking Around) 1 Cor. 11:29, 33-34

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)

23 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*

24 *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

25 *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

26 *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*