

GOVERNMENT

I. Authority of Government

- A. God is ultimate authority - Rom. 13:1
 - 1. God is omnipotent
 - 2. God is sovereign - Ps. 75:7; Dan. 4:34
- B. God has instituted human government - Rom. 13:1; Prov. 8:15,16
 - 1. Not merely "social compact" or "consent of governed" or "will of majority"
 - 2. Jesus recognized authority of government
 - a. Caesar - Matt. 22:15-22
 - b. Pilate - Matt. 26:59; 27:1; John 19:11
 - c. Herod
 - d. High priest
 - e. Sanhedrin
- C. Human government answerable to God
 - 1. servants of God - Rom. 13:6
 - 2. judged of God for failure to act in God's authority - Ps. 2:2-6,10; Rev. 17-20
- D. Authority of government not dependent on moral character of leadership
- E. Form of government
 - 1. No particular form of government advocated - theocracy, autocracy, democracy
 - 2. God is a God of order.
 - 3. Any form of government better than no government, anarchy, chaos
Judges 17:6; 21:25

II. Function of Government

- A. Administration of justice
 - 1. judge with righteousness - Ps. 72:2
 - 2. crush the oppressor - Ps. 72:4
 - 3. rescue from oppression and violence - Ps. 72:14
 - 4. avenger who brings wrath on those practice evil - Rom. 13:4
 - 5. punishment of evildoers - I Peter 2:14
 - 6. use the sword - Rom. 13:4
 - 7. law and order
 - 8. government has right and obligation to resist overthrow, punish treason, defend itself
- B. General welfare of citizens
 - 1. vindicate the afflicted, care for needy - Ps. 72:4
 - 2. compassion for poor and needy - Ps. 72:13; Jere 22:16
 - 3. bring peace - Ps. 72:3
 - 4. praise of those who do right - Rom. 13:3; I Peter 2:14 (moral standards?)
 - 5. to allow for tranquil and quiet life - I Tim. 2:2
 - 6. public health and education?
 - 7. philanthropic activities?

III. Responsibility to Government

- A. Respect and honor toward government - Rom. 13:7
- B. Submit to government - Rom 13:1; Titus 3:1; I Pet. 2:13
- C. Pay taxes to government - Lk. 20:25; Rom. 13:6,7
- D. Pray for government - I Tim. 2:2
- E. Serve in military?
- F. Serve in public office?

IV. Disobedience of Government

- A. Authority of government is not unlimited.
 - 1. Not blind patriotism, "my country, right or wrong"
 - 2. Absolute, unqualified subjection due only to absolute, unqualified authority of God.
- B. Human government usurps God's authority when demands subjection to laws contrary to God's character and expectations.
- C. Legitimate cause for civil disobedience - Acts 5:29
 - 1. Not mere personal disagreement with ideology or policies
 - 2. Biblical examples
 - a. Daniel - prayer - Dan. 6
 - b. Peter - preaching - Acts 5:27-30
 - c. Paul - Acts 16:35-40; Acts 17:7
- D. Resist government, resist God - Rom. 13:2
 - 1. Is there ever legitimate time to resist, oppose, revolt, rebel, undermine, subvert in insurrection, overthrow of government?

V. Some practical questions:

- A. Is there legitimate cause to tax-revolt? American Revolution?
- B. Were European Christians right in defying Nazi authorities?
- C. Is Operation Rescue a legitimate cause for civil disobedience
- D. Should we seek a theocracy that reconstructs the dominion of theonomy?