

Civics Lessons from the Source

Romans 13:1-7

Part One:
*Authority and
Government*



Why this subject?

Because a notable deficiency has been revealed.

Because the Lord is the source of all civic authority.

Because the Lord has instructed us concerning civics.

Because we are to be good citizens **for Him**.

Because we are His ambassadors to the world.



Preliminary Points

We will not exhaust this topic.

This subject is not new.

We must beware the times.

We must beware the cliffs of insanity!



Romans 13:1-3

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed
the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed
will receive condemnation upon themselves.

For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior,
but for evil.

Romans 13:3-4

Do you want to have no fear of authority?
Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;
for it is a minister of God to you for good.
But if you do what is evil, be afraid;
for it does not bear the sword for nothing;
for it is a minister of God, an avenger
who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

Romans 13:5-7

Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

For because of this you also pay taxes,
for rulers are servants of God,
devoting themselves to this very thing.

Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due;
custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear;
honor to whom honor.

Main Point

It is critical that we understand the government's authority and duty so that we might honor Christ and fulfill our duties to our community and our nation.





Civics from the Source

What are we taught about authority?

Lessons on Authority

All authority is from God who is **THE** Authority.

Romans 13:1

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to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

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For **there is no authority** except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

All authority is from God

Romans 13:1

Every person is to be in subjection
to governing authorities.

For there is no authority **except from God**,
and those which exist are established by God.

There is no source of authority
apart from God, nor does any authority
exist outside of His jurisdiction.

He is King of kings!



Romans 13:1

Every person is to be in subjection
to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,

and **those [authorities] which exist** are established by God.

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Every person is to be in subjection
to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,

and those [authorities] which exist **are established by God.**

Rightful structures of authority
are established by God.
Those who sit in the seats of these
structures are appointed by Him
and are accountable to Him!



Lessons on Authority

All authority is from God as THE Authority.

God delegates authority in spheres.

God does delegate His authority

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and **let them rule** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

God does delegate His authority

Romans 13:1

Every person is to be in subjection
to governing authorities.

For **there is no authority except from God,**
and those which exist are established by God.

Authorities do exist

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Authorities do exist

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Every person is to be in subjection
to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and **those which exist are established by God.**

**Governments do have authority,
but that authority is delegated
to them by God.**

God delegates authority in spheres or domains

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself

to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

God delegates authority in spheres or domains

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself

to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

God, in His infinite wisdom,
has always divided authority into
many jurisdictions or spheres.

God charges these authorities to govern

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself

to **governing** authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

God charges these authorities to govern

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself

to **governing** authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

But God intends that they govern
within the sphere or domain
that **He** has given them.

What are these spheres?

Individuals

Families

Churches

Governments

Institutions



Individuals? Really?

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself

to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

This command, like every command,
assumes that the person has a duty
before God to *self-govern*.

God charges each person to take responsibility for himself and will hold each accountable for his work. If we did not have authority to self-govern, we would not have responsibility or accountability.



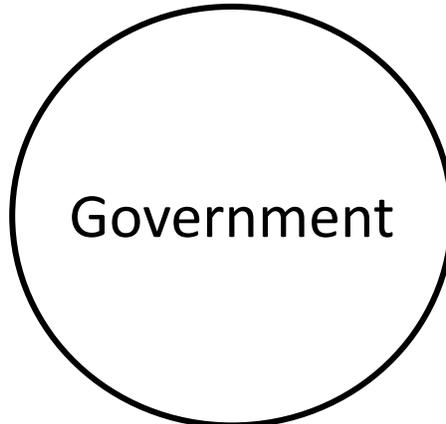
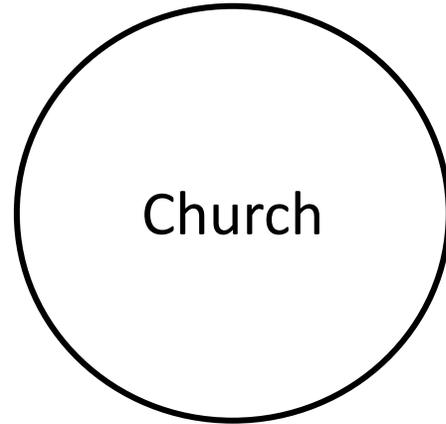
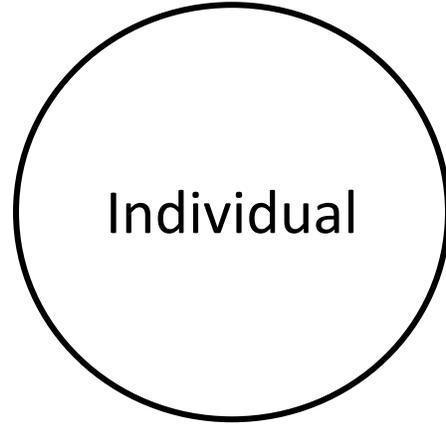
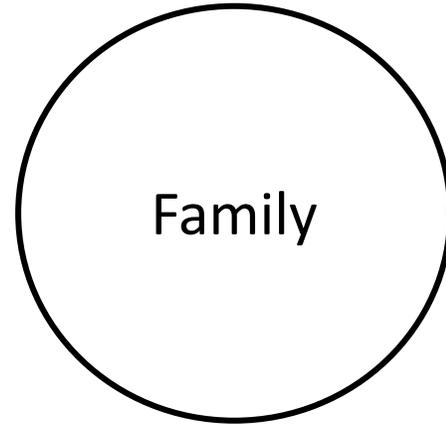
Let's look at how these spheres
of authority work.



**Spheres of
Authority**

G O D

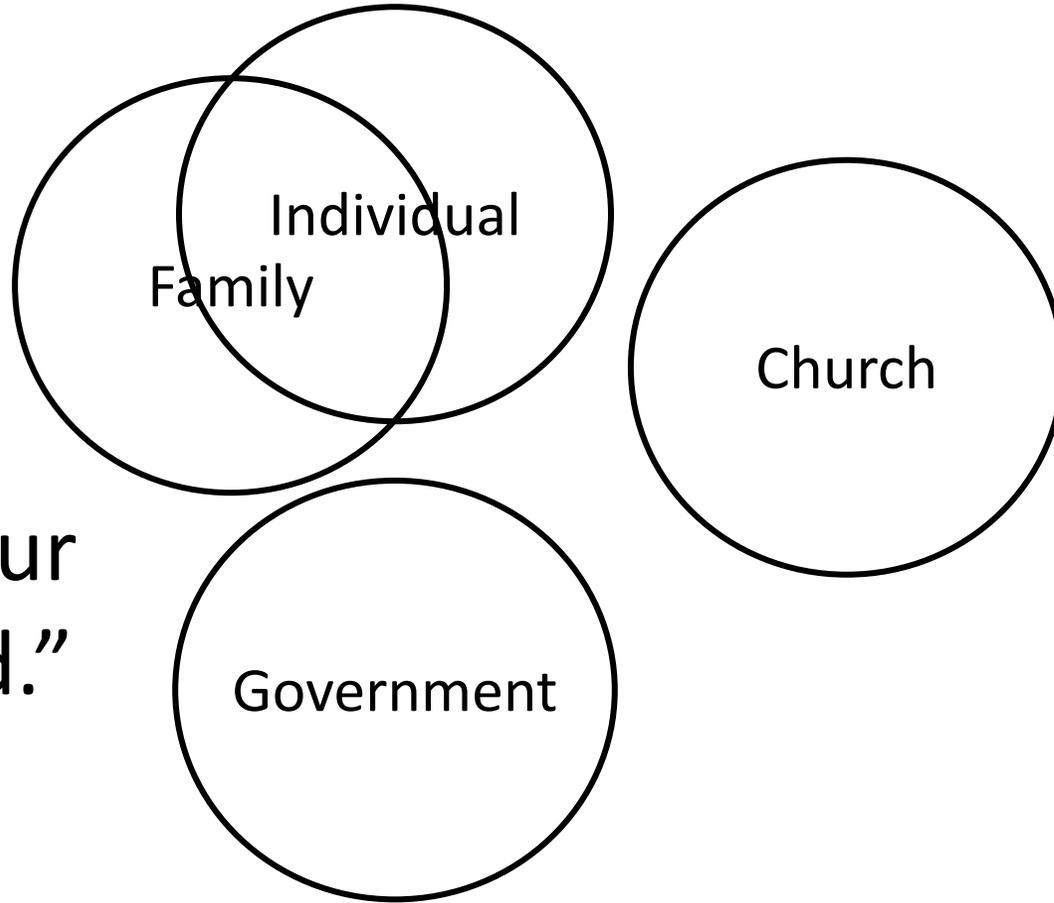
**These spheres
sometimes
overlap**



Spheres of Authority

G O D

These spheres sometimes overlap

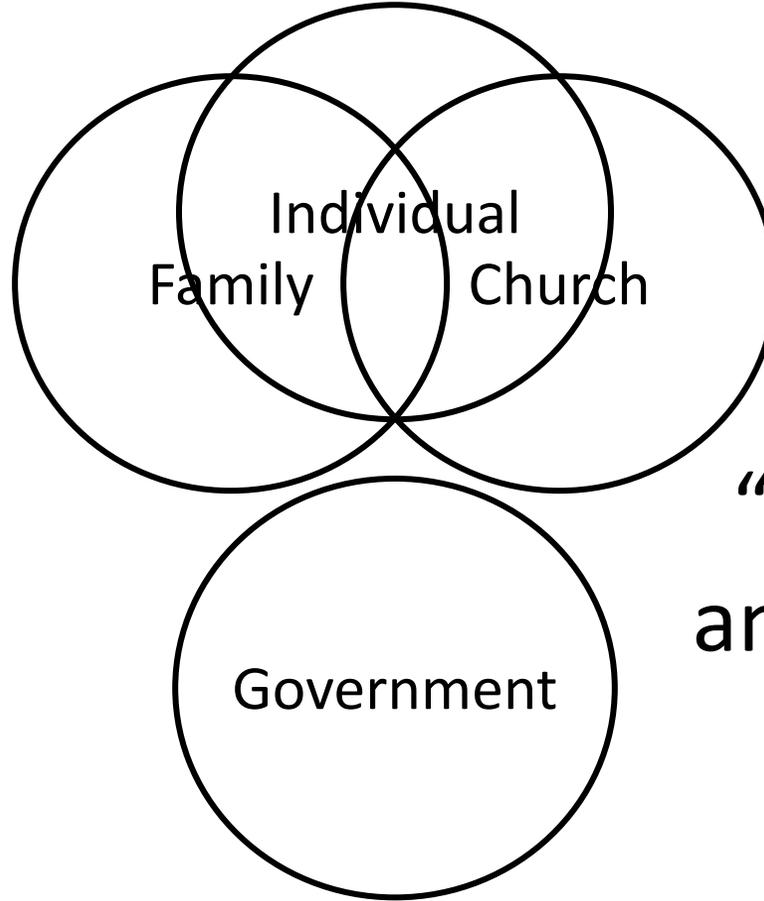


“Children, obey your parents in the Lord.”

**Spheres of
Authority**

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**These spheres
sometimes
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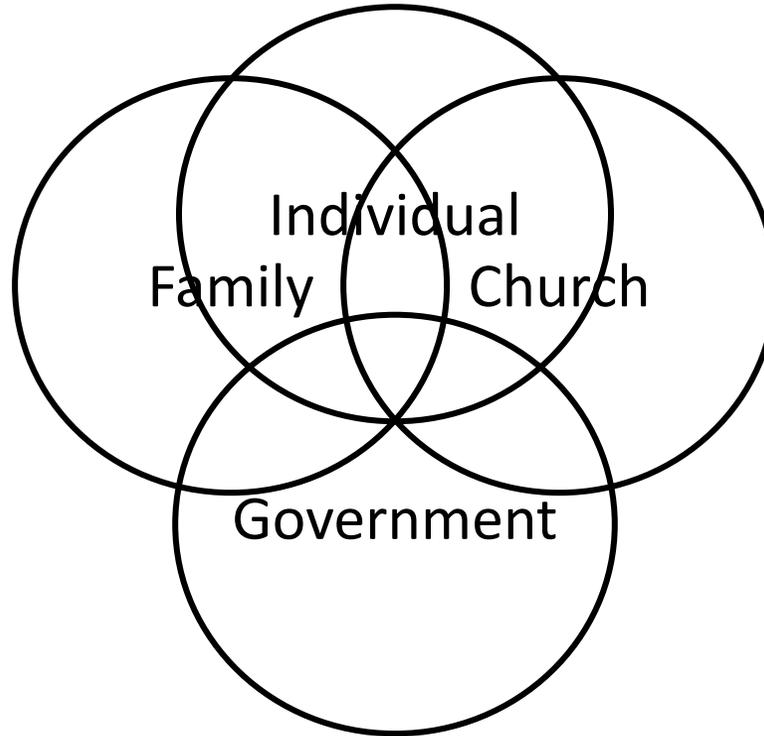


**“Obey your leaders
and submit to them.”**

**Spheres of
Authority**

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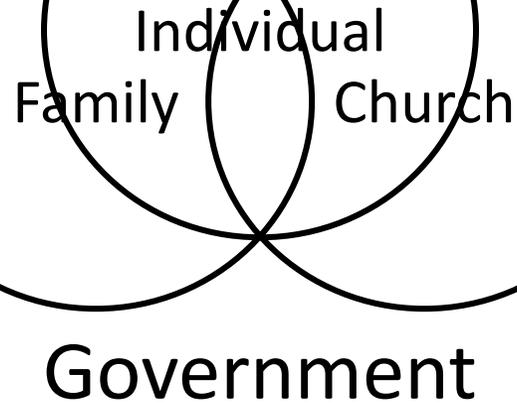
**These spheres
sometimes
overlap**



**“Every person is to submit himself to
the governing authorities.”**

Spheres of Authority

GOD



The “king” does have *oversight* over all the nation for its good.

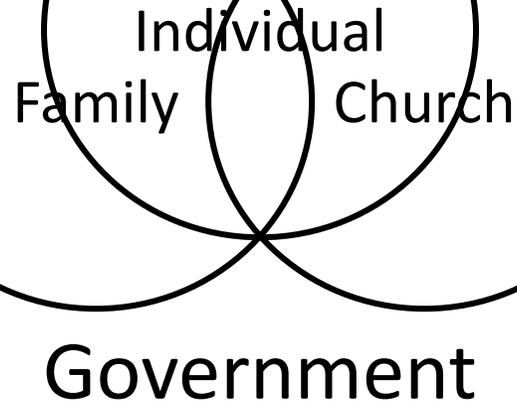
1 Timothy 2:1-2

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for **kings** and all who are in authority, **so that** we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

It is the king's duty to facilitate tranquility and peace for the flourishing of the nation.

**Spheres of
Authority**

G O D



The government has oversight for good.

Spheres of Authority

Government

Family

Individual

Church

But we must not make government a god,
or fragment the other authorities.

Spheres of Authority

Government

Family

Individual

Church

We must not make government to be our
Provider and Protector, looking to it
as Guardian and Caretaker.

Lessons on Authority

All authority is from God as THE Authority.

God delegates authority in spheres.

Only God's authority is absolute.

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself
to governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God,
and those which exist are established by God.

Romans 13:1

Every person is to subject himself
to governing authorities.

For there is **no authority except from God,**
and those which exist are established by God.

Deuteronomy 4:35

To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD,
He is God; there is no other besides Him.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD,
He is God in heaven above and on the earth below;
there is no other.

Deuteronomy 4:35

To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD,
He is God; there is no other besides Him.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD,
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Deuteronomy 4:35

To you it was shown that you might know that the LORD,
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Deuteronomy 4:39

Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the LORD,
He is God in heaven above and on the earth below;

there is no other.

His authority, *and only His authority,*
is absolute!

Because no human authority is absolute,
each authority must learn submission.
And each authority must learn *and* labor
to exercise its authority only within the
sphere or domain it has been given.





Civics from the Source

What are we taught about authority?

What are we taught about government?

Lessons on Government

Government is a gift of God.

Romans 13:3-4

Do you want to have no fear of authority?
Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;
for it is a minister of God to you for good.

Romans 13:3-4

Do you want to have no fear of authority?

Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

for **it is a minister of God to you for good.**

Government is a gift of God for good;
He established it for the preservation
of stability and security and to facilitate
the flourishing of the people.

Proverbs 29:4

The king gives stability to the land by justice.



Lessons on Government

Government is a gift of God.

Government is a servant of God.

Romans 13:3-4 and 6

Do you want to have no fear of authority?
Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;
for it is a servant of God to you for good.
But if you do what is evil, be afraid;
for it does not bear the sword for nothing;
for it is a servant of God, an avenger
who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

Romans 13:3-4 and 6

Do you want to have no fear of authority?
Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

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for it does not bear the sword for nothing;

for **it is a servant of God**, an avenger
who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

For because of this you also pay taxes,
for ***rulers* are servants of God**,
devoting themselves to this very thing.

We must not think that governments
are independent of God.
Governments, **and** those who sit in their
seats, *are servants of God.*
And they are servants
for good as He defines it.



Romans 13:3-4

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who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

But what is this good?

Look at the context!

Romans 13:8-10

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another;
for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

For this, *“You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet,”* and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

The good for which God charges governments to labor is the good of love worked out and illustrated in His Law.

But how will they know it?



In one sense, they already do!

Romans 2:14-15

For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that **they show the work of the Law written in their hearts.**

But this is not enough.

It is the duty of the church to serve our communities and our nation by not only teaching our leaders biblical civics but by teaching them the good as God defines it.
Who else is qualified to do this?



The Church is an ambassador
of Christ, and there is no other
“pillar and support of the truth”!

(1 Timothy 3:15)



Lessons on Government

Government is a gift of God.

Government is a servant of God.

Government is a servant of the people.

Romans 13:3-4

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But if you do what is evil, be afraid;
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who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

Government is given by God
for the good *of the people!*

How is it to serve the people?

Romans 13:3-4

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But if you do what is evil, be afraid;
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who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

It is to “praise” the good!

Romans 13:3-4

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for it does not bear the sword for nothing;
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who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

It is to punish evil!

Romans 13:3-4

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But if you do what is evil, be afraid;

for **it does not bear the sword for nothing;**

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who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

1 Peter 2:13-14

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

A Governor's Job Description!

1 Peter 2:13-14

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority,

or to governors as **sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.**

It is to redress the wrongs for the victims

Romans 13:3-4

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Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;
for it is a minister of God to you for good.
But if you do what is evil, be afraid;
for it does not bear the sword for nothing;

for **it is** a minister of God, **an avenger**
who brings wrath on the one
who practices evil.

Properly functioning government
preserves stability and security
for its lawful citizens and works to
provide justice to the wronged.



Psalm 21:15

The exercise of justice is joy for the righteous,
But is terror to the workers of iniquity.

Proverbs 29:4

The king gives stability to the land by justice,
But a man who takes bribes overthrows it.

Ecclesiastes 8:11

Because the sentence against an evil deed is not
executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons
of men among them are given fully to do evil.

Conclusion:

Imagine governing authorities diligently laboring for the praise of the good, for the punishment of evil, and for the flourishing of all.

We don't have to imagine, we have such a Governor in Christ our King!



This Governor, Christ our King, has assigned us a task that is yet unfinished, a task to make disciples by proclaiming Christ, baptizing, and teaching obedience to all that He commands.

