

Nation under God

Week 1: Church and State – Romans 13:1-7

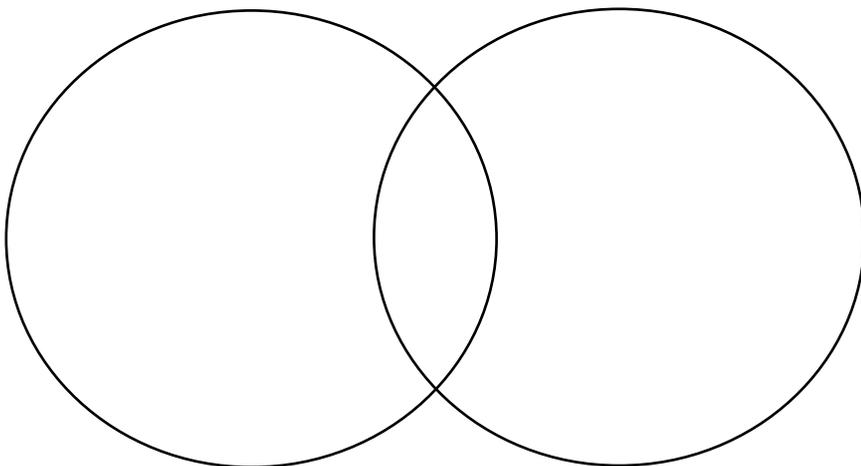
Weekly Summary: God has given the church a vastly different job than he has given the government. Both roles are important! But when these roles are mixed together, society breaks down ... and God winds up with a bad name. It's time for us to restore—and retain—the biblical views of church and state!



- ❖ **Romans 13:1-2** – Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.
²Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

- ❖ **Romans 13:3-4** – For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended.
⁴For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.
 - God wants the government to _____ the bad and _____ the good.

- ❖ **1 Timothy 2:1-2** – I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—²for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.



- When church and government get mixed up, so does the _____.

- ❖ **Romans 13:5-7** – Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. ⁶This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

- God wants Christians to _____, _____, and _____.

- ❖ **Romans 3** – All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
- Romans 4** – Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.
- Romans 5** – But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- Romans 6** – The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Romans 7** – What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Romans 8** – He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Digging Deeper

1. Read 1 Peter 2:13-14. How do Peter and Paul's words compare to your previous understanding of the role of government? How did their teaching affect your point of view?
2. Can you think of any historical examples where Church and State have gotten mixed together? What resulted from the union?
3. Paul writes that submitting to the government is necessary “not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.” What does that mean?
4. Study the conversation in John 18:33-40 between Jesus, the head of the Church, and Pontius Pilate, the governor at Jesus' time. How do Jesus' words prove the point of today's message? How well does Pilate fulfill his role as a governing authority?
5. Read Romans 13:8-10. Can you think of any times when you have not shown Christian love to someone because of political divisions? How might your words and behaviors change on the basis of what we learned today?
6. **Homework:** Read Daniel 3 to start thinking ahead to next week's message!
7. **Challenge:** Say a prayer each day this week for your governing officials.