

BE JUST. KIND. HUMBLE.

WEEK 5: WHERE POLITICS AND RELIGION MEET

Almighty God, Point us to you. In spaces both sacred and secular, Point us to you. In the heat of disagreement, Point us to you. In our deepest convictions, Point us to you. In every facet of our lives, Point us to you. Amen

WEEK 5: OCTOBER 16, 2022

READ Romans 13:1-7

13 Every person should place themselves under the authority of the government. There isn't any authority unless it comes from God, and the authorities that are there have been put in place by God. 2 So anyone who opposes the authority is standing against what God has established. People who take this kind of stand will get punished. 3 The authorities don't frighten people who are doing the right thing. Rather, they frighten people who are doing wrong. Would you rather not be afraid of authority? Do what's right, and you will receive its approval. 4 It is God's servant given for your benefit. But if you do what's wrong, be afraid because it doesn't have weapons to enforce the law for nothing. It is God's servant put in place to carry out his punishment on those who do what is wrong. 5 That is why it is necessary to place yourself under the government's authority, not only to avoid God's punishment but also for the sake of your conscience. 6 You should also pay taxes for the same reason, because the authorities are God's assistants, concerned with this very thing. 7 So pay everyone what you owe them. Pay the taxes you owe, pay the duties you are charged, give respect to those you should respect, and honor those you should honor.

GETTING STARTED

- Welcome each other.
- Inquire as to anyone who is missing. Is follow-up needed?
- What is/was your initial reaction to the title of this sermon-- "What the Nation Needs from the Church"?



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SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- The Apostle Paul is sometimes associated with controversial comments. How do you react to his admonition: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities"?
- Why is it important to "unpack" this rather startling, "black and white" expectation as Pastor Rob does in the introduction of the sermon? What is your general level of frustration with responses that begin with, "It depends..."? Are there examples of tensions between church and state that are particularly important to you?
- Pastor Rob emphasizes the importance of considering context for any given issue. How does this relate to what Micah says God asks of us?
- What is the role of government, as discussed in this sermon?
- The central question addressed in this sermon is "What does the nation need from the church right now?" What is meant by "the nation"? "The church"?
- Pastor Rob says the first contribution that Christians can make to the nation is to pursue truth and clarify one's values. Has your pursuit of truth ever resulted in a change of mind or heart? What have been the impacts of this change, if any?
- The second need is for Christians to be servants to others. What does servanthood look like in the context of this sermon?
- The third need is to remember that one does not need to like to love. What does this mean? Do Pastor Rob's examples help? Can you relate to them? (Maybe not.)
- In sum, as Pastor Rob teased in his Friday email message: what is a Christian's responsibility to the state? What should be our witness in times of national divide that doesn't mean advocating for one side or just avoiding issues of the day altogether?
- Given that this is the last sermon in this series, what will you remember next week? Next month? The three things God requires of us? How Jesus redefines who is our neighbor and what this means for our daily lives? Our specific responsibilities to the nation? One or two themes that have pervaded each of the five sermons?

PRAYER REQUESTS

