

John 19:9-11

The Bible's View of Human Government

Introduction:

As we think about the government of the United States of America we are reminded of the Biblical standards as laid down by the apostle Paul in Romans 13:1-7(Veteran's Day) for one there is the need to submit to the government authority because it derives from God. During the Vietnam War the fighting dragged on and on, there appeared to be no end in sight. As a result great opposition arose and people began to ask whether they could rightly participate in the Armed Forces. The war became increasingly unpopular with many hundreds of those serving our country dying in battle. With no sign of victory in sight many began protesting and many left the country to avoid the draft. On the other hand there were those who called them deserters and argued that the government has the right to wage war and must be obeyed and supported.

I. GOVERNMENT'S POWER AND AUTHORITY

A. Puzzling questions...?

B. Guidelines based upon Biblical Revelation:

1. Note. Paul's discussion of authority of government
2. Pilate represents human government – Rom.13:1-7
3. Jesus represents divine government.

C. Observations:

1. The power of government is derived from God (Caesar / Pilate) John 3:3
2. The two spheres of authority are not separated from each other but they are brought into relationship with each other – v.11 cf. Matt. 26:24; Luke 12:47,58
3. God's Sovereignty is supreme over every evil situation (Gk.exousia) Prov. 16:4; 21:1 (Prov.16:1,9; 19:21; Job 23:13; Psa. 33:11)

II. LIMITATIONS OF GOVERNMENT POWER AND AUTHORITY

A. Important Questions:

1. Can Kings and Presidents exercise complete liberty to carry out their wicked schemes?
2. Can they impose their wicked agenda's upon the church which are contrary to the Word of God?

B. Authority necessitates responsibility

C. Limitations:

1. Human governments must not forbid the preaching of the gospel – Matt. 28:18-20
 - a. Peter and John were threatened – Turn To: Acts 4:13-22
 - b. Peter and John were prepared to suffer the consequences – Turn To: Acts 5:17-26
 - c. Peter and John when faced with the prohibition of teaching the gospel, they refused to comply – Acts 15:28-32
 - d. Persecutions in the Church
 - (1.) Muslim countries do not permit Christian Worship Services.
 - (2.) The Scottish Covenanters (Hope Marston's book: "Against the Tide")
2. Human Governments must not command Christians to perform Immoral acts. (Nazi Germany, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, **Applications for our day**) **What can the Christians Do?** Ans. Rom.12:17-21 (Psa.54,83)