

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** Christian Citizenship

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Romans 13:1-7

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2080

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The book of Romans is the constitution of Christianity and is a solid word for this unsure age.
- b) Today's message deals with the question of Christians and patriotism and what the Bible has to say about Christian citizenship.
  - i) What are our responsibilities, duties and rights?
  - ii) Did God ordain human government and then tell His people to stay out of it?
- c) Many Christians have simply dropped out of human government.
  - i) They see involvement in government as the social gospel.
    - (1) There is only one Gospel, and that is the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (2) Some people have substituted culture for Calvary, and others think that if we get involved in government that all we're trying to do is make the world a better place to go to Hell from.
  - ii) Others have dropped out simply because they have given up hope.
    - (1) They believe America has crossed a point of no return.
  - iii) Still others have dropped out because they see politics as dirty and something that would defile them.
    - (1) They believe that we as Christians are to be other-worldly; that our kingdom is not of this world and that we don't want to get contaminated with politics.
  - iv) Many have dropped out and don't participate in government because they are intimidated.
    - (1) The ACLU and others have prated so much about the separation of church and state that they think we as Christians somehow have no rights, privileges or prerogatives.
- d) Where can we find answers to the questions of the Christian's role in government?
  - i) Will we find the answers from self-serving politicians who want to co-opt the church and use the church for their purposes?
  - ii) Do the politicians know the answer, and will they tell us what is right or what is wrong?
  - iii) Will we get the answers from humanists and secularists who don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, don't believe in God and don't believe in the church?
  - iv) Will we get the answers from philosophers?
  - v) The only place where we will find the answers is in the Word of God.
    - (1) The book of Romans speaks very clearly and plainly about the matter of Christians citizenship.
- e) Romans 13:1-7
  - i) The word "powers" in verse one means "authorities."
    - (1) It is literally talking about the civil magistrate, the governmental leader.

- f) The big question is not can we be Christians and be involved in government, but rather can we be Christians and not be involved.
  - i) Can we obey the Word of God and not be involved?

## 2) THE REASONS FOR HUMAN GOVERNMENT

- a) The Bible tells us that human government is ordained of God.
  - i) God sets up kings, and God brings kings down.
    - (1) God ordains rulers, and sometimes God sets up wicked rulers.
    - (2) Daniel 2:21
  - ii) One of the mightiest rulers in the Old Testament was King Nebuchadnezzar.
    - (1) He ruled over ancient Babylon.
    - (2) Daniel was in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel prophesied and testified to Nebuchadnezzar and told him where his power came from.
    - (3) Daniel 2:37
    - (4) Nebuchadnezzar was not a godly king, and God set him up and also brought him down.
  - iii) In the Old Testament, Pharaoh was wicked, anti-God and a murderer of little babies.
    - (1) He came into his kingdom because God raised him up.
      - (a) Romans 9:17
  - iv) In the New Testament, Pilate didn't have the courage to release Jesus.
    - (1) John 19:11
      - (a) Even Pilate, who allowed Jesus to be crucified, did not have any power except it was given to him from above.
  - v) When the apostle Paul wrote this chapter of the book of Romans, Caesar and the Roman government were in power.
    - (1) This was not a democracy; Christians were disenfranchised and had no political power.
    - (2) In fact, what Christians believed was considered illegal because they would not say that Caesar is Lord.
    - (3) It was at this time that Paul wrote that the powers that be are ordained of God.
      - (a) Romans 13:1
  - vi) The Bible says that if we resist these powers, then we are resisting God because it is God who set them up.
    - (1) Romans 13:2
- b) God ordains human government for two reasons:
  - i) To restrain evil.
    - (1) Romans 13:3-4
    - (2) We cannot legislate morality; there is no law on Earth to make us moral.
      - (a) Laws cannot make us good; only God can make us good.
      - (b) Government is not here to make us good.

- (3) Since we cannot legislate morality, we must legislate against immorality.
  - (a) There's no law that can make someone honest, so we have to have laws to keep someone from stealing.
- (4) We should thank God for those who are here to restrain evil.
  - (a) Police officers are here to restrain evil.
- (5) Romans 13:4
  - (a) The sword is an instrument of death.
  - (b) Sometimes, in order to restrain evil, the government must take life.
    - (i) Exodus 20:13
      - 1. The Hebrew translation of this passage states, "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt take no personal vengeance."
    - (ii) Exodus 21:12
      - 1. The author of Exodus 20:13 also wrote this passage in Exodus 21.
    - (iii) Genesis 9:6
      - 1. All murder is killing, but not all killing is murder.
      - 2. The civil magistrates are God's ordained ministers to do this work.
    - (iv) God is infinite love.
      - 1. The coddling of the murderer is cruelty to the community.
  - (c) Some say that God is too good to punish sin when, in fact, God is too good not to punish sin.
    - (i) The cross of Calvary was capital punishment.
      - 1. The Roman soldiers were only instruments that nailed the Lord Jesus to the cross.
      - 2. The Jewish council were the ones who hounded the Lord Jesus to the cross.
      - 3. God the Son died at the hands of God the Father.
        - a. God the Father poured out His wrath upon His only Son.
        - b. God's Son was standing in our place; Jesus was our substitute.
        - c. Jesus took the death that we should have died.
          - i. Romans 6:23
- (d) Exodus 22:2-3
  - (i) According to this Scripture, we have a right to protect our loved ones.
- (6) There are times when a nation has to stand up.
  - (a) There are times when we as individuals must stand up to protect our children and those we love.
  - (b) Was it wrong to stand against Hitler?
  - (c) Was it wrong to stand against Stalin?
  - (d) Was it wrong to stand against Saddam Hussein?
  - (e) To believe in a police force is to also believe in an army.

- (i) In fact, a police force is a type of army.
    - ii) To reward good.
      - (1) Romans 13:3
      - (2) The framers of the American Constitution were soaked in the Word of God, and they wrote that we are to promote the general welfare and to provide the common defense.
        - (a) They did not say to “provide” the general welfare, but to promote it.
        - (b) This idea comes out of the Scripture we’re dealing with today.
- 3) THE REQUIREMENTS FOR HUMAN GOVERNMENT (ROMANS 13:5-6)
- a) We have responsibilities to God that override any other responsibility, and we have a responsibility to human government.
  - b) Matthew 22:15-21
    - i) This is a key passage as we understand our responsibility as Christian citizens and as Christian brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.
      - (1) The framers of our Constitution understood this, too.
        - (a) The phrase “separation of church and state” is not found in the Constitution.
    - ii) This Scripture does not mean the separation of God and government.
      - (1) Our Founding Fathers did not believe in the separation of God and government.
        - (a) In the Declaration of Independence, they wrote that our rights come from God, not from government.
    - iii) Our Constitution states that Congress shall make no laws establishing a religion, which means that we do not want a state-mandated, state-supported church.
      - (1) At the time the Constitution was written, the British were Anglicans, the Germans were Lutherans and the French were Catholics.
      - (2) The constitution provides for a free church in a free state.
        - (a) We desire the government to be free to do what it can do so that the church can be free to do what it alone can do.
          - (i) The government is here to restrain evil.
          - (ii) The church is here to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
      - (3) The state is not the master of the church, and the church is not the master of the state.
        - (a) The church is the conscience of the state.
          - (i) We are to hold up a standard.
  - c) As Christians, we have six duties concerning our government.
    - i) We have to pay for our government.
      - (1) Romans 13:6-7
        - (a) “Tribute” is similar to our income tax.
        - (b) “Custom” would be like our sales tax.
      - (2) The Lord Jesus paid His taxes, and we should pay our taxes.

- (a) Matthew 17:27
- (3) Ever-increasing taxes are a burden, and excessive taxes are sinful and dangerous.
  - (a) A government is on its last leg when half of the people get the idea they don't have to work because the other half will take care of them, and the other half get the idea it does no good to work because somebody else gets what they work for.
- ii) We are to pray for our government.
  - (1) 1 Timothy 2:1-3
  - (2) We should pray for our leaders, especially for wicked leaders.
    - (a) God can change a ruler, He can remove a ruler, and He can overrule a ruler.
      - (i) Proverbs 21:1
  - (3) The greatest responsibility in America is not in the White House but in the church house.
- iii) We are to praise our government.
  - (1) Romans 13:7
  - (2) 1 Peter 2:17
  - (3) Patriotism is not bad; there is nothing wrong with patriotism.
    - (a) When our government is good, we can praise our government.
    - (b) It doesn't mean that we love other nations less when we love America specially.
    - (c) This is our native land.
      - (i) We love our own families in a way that we don't love other families.
      - (ii) Psalm 137:5
- iv) We are to preach to our government.
  - (1) We are to praise our country when it does right, and we are to preach to our country when it does wrong.
    - (a) God's people dare not be silent.
  - (2) We dare not identify the Christian faith with the Democrat or the Republican party.
    - (a) We need to be free to tell both parties to repent and get right with God.
  - (3) We should be civil, but we should not be silent.
    - (a) Nathan warned David.
    - (b) Elijah preached to Ahab.
    - (c) Eleazar warned Jehoshaphat.
    - (d) Daniel preached to Nebuchadnezzar.
    - (e) Moses warned Pharaoh.
    - (f) John the Baptist preached to Herod.
    - (g) We must say to our government that what is morally wrong is not politically right.
- v) We are to participate in our government.

- (1) Romans 13:7
- (2) Matthew 22:20-21
  - (a) Our greatest and highest allegiance is to God.
  - (b) We do not have a Caesar as they did in Bible times; our government is of the people, by the people and for the people.
    - (i) If we do not participate in our government, then we have not rendered to our Caesar the things that belong to our Caesar.
    - (ii) If we do not inform ourselves and vote, then we have disobeyed the Lord Jesus.
- (3) It is inconceivable that God would have ordained human government and then tell His people to stay out of it.
  - (a) If we Christians do not participate in our government, then whom does that leave to run it?
- (4) We as Christians are to participate, not on the basis of parties or persons or politics, but on principles.
- (5) We are to be informed.
- vi) We are to persuade our government.
  - (1) Our government is a republic; a representative rule by law.
  - (2) All America is based on public opinion.
    - (a) Our only hope for America is to change public opinion, and the only thing that can change public opinion is the Word of God.
  - (3) We will not out-argue people.
    - (a) They are blinded and do not see.
    - (b) They need Jesus.
  - (4) We are to persuade our people and win souls to the Lord Jesus.

#### 4) CONCLUSION

- a) In ancient Rome, the Coliseum would seat 50,000 people according to modern estimates.
  - i) They would put the Christians in the Coliseum and make them fight against gladiators and lions for entertainment.
  - ii) Underneath the Coliseum in the catacombs, the Christians huddled together and worshipped.
    - (1) These people underground were the ones who said, "Jesus is Lord, not Caesar."
    - (2) And these were the ones who brought the whole thing in the Coliseum crashing down.
      - (a) That's where the power is.
- b) It is not political influence that we need but the power of God.
  - i) When we change America, we'll change the politics.
- c) Whether America survives or not, there is another Kingdom and another King; His name is Jesus.
  - i) We need to render unto God the things that are God's.
  - ii) Your life belongs to God, and you can give it to Him right now.

- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16