

Christ is Risen!

So let's talk about the government. If you're startled, that's the idea. It is pretty startling that a dead man would come back from the dead. You should never get over it. In fact, you won't ever get over it, as Christ's resurrection is our resurrection. We will live forever.

But, until the end of time, we'll have to deal with the third estate - the government. It has, in fact, been put in place by God. **"For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God" (Rom 13:1b).** We can't be cynical about this, then. Skeptical? Yes, but not cynical. What God ordains is always good.

Now if your sense is that God didn't design the current way our government works, you're on to something, and should probably be teaching Political Science as an adjunct professor. The problem is that the government is running away, and running away quickly, from their divine purpose - to reward good and (most especially) to punish evil. **"Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for our good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer." (Rom 13:3b-4).**

Reward good. Punish evil. That's all government has to be. And when they get away from that, it's not good. Actually, it's evil. Some leaders are calling good evil and evil good. Washington State has a policy that prevents teachers from revealing a child's gender transition to parents unless the child gives permission to the teacher. There's countless other things we could point to where officials are calling evil things good and vice versa, but as I write this, it's a sunny day and I'm in a good mood. However, we must engage the world, even if it makes us upset. If God avoided everything that made Him upset, He wouldn't have saved 8 in the flood. He would've killed us all. If God avoided everything that made Him upset, He wouldn't have become one of us. Countless humans, all who have been made in the image of God, have rejected God in the flesh. That upsets Him, but He goes to the cross and dies for the entire world anyways.

As I write this, I hear your objections in my head. The 1st is, "Yeah, okay, pastor, but what about the separation of church and state?" What about it? God uses the state to protect the church. He has the state restrain evil by physical means so that the Gospel can be preached to all nations. Jesus is the Lord, and that means He is the Lord of all. He's the Lord of the church. AND He's the Lord of the government. What's separate is that the government can't tell the church what to preach. By the way, that's what's been happening in Canada now for the last few years. Pray for our brothers and sisters up there.

The 2nd objection is, “Doesn’t Romans 13 say to be in subjection to those in authority since all authority has been instituted by God?” Yes, yes it does, my friend. So let’s use that logic - all authority has been instituted by God. What kind of government do we have? A government by the people for the people - a democratic republic. So if we just blindly do absolutely everything that certain officials say without questioning it (wear 3 masks, hide in your basement, and don’t get any sunshine) then we are actually disobeying Romans 13 by not actively participating in the authority God has set up.

How do we fix it? Well, we’ll need divine intervention. Repentance is a great place to start. Our leaders need to repent, but we also need to repent for not doing our due diligence as citizens. We (obviously) haven’t done a great job in making sure our representatives will do what God has commanded them to do.

We can’t be cynical about this. Many will say, “We’ve made our bed, and now we must lie in it.” That’s ridiculous. How many of you have actually made your bed and found it so uncomfortable that you just tried to sleep there all night? Get up, remake the bed, and make it better, all by God’s grace.

In Christ,

Pastor