

## God And The Nations v3

### Lesson 6

#### How Should Christians Behave Toward Governments?

## How Can Our Faith Endure A National Judgment?

1. Live by faith believing and obeying God for salvation
2. Live by faith believing God has ruled and Jesus is now ruling the nations
3. Live by faith trusting God will supply our daily strength and needs
4. Live by faith trusting God to deliver us from all trials including death

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## Introduction

- We should be thankful to God that He, now through Jesus, controls the nations, always doing what is best for His purpose to go forward
- We must always remember that neither we nor any leaders can ever overcome Jesus in His controlling of the nations
- Since righteousness exalts a nation, we should seek to live as faithful Christians above all else

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## Introduction

- However, the Scriptures reveal much about how Christians are to behave toward governments wherever they may be living
- In this lesson, we seek to study these principles which we must follow if we are to please God
- Let us always be guided by God's Word and not political parties or any worldly thinking

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## Submit to God in all relationships including governments

- As Christians, our conduct in all areas of life must be determined by the authority of Christ, not by our own feelings
- How we relate to family, the local church, governments, the workplace and in all things must be determined by Christ
- Therefore, we submit to governments for the Lord's sake

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## Submit to God in all relationships including governments

- As is obedience to Christ, obedience to governments and all relationships is to be done willingly, not grudgingly
- We dare not disregard civil laws that do not conflict with God's Word
- When civil laws do conflict with God's Word, we must obey God rather than men
- Ultimately, our citizenship is in heaven

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Col 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Col 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

Col 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

Col 3:21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Col 3:22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

Col 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,

Col 3:24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Col 3:25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

Col 4:1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Col 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

Col 4:4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Col 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

Col 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Rom 13:1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Rom 13:2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

13

Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

Rom 13:4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

Rom 13:5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

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Submit to God in all relationships  
including governments

1Pe 2:13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority,

1Pe 2:14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

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Submit to governments when laws  
do not violate God's word

Tit 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,

Tit 3:2 to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

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Submit to governments when laws  
do not violate God's word

Tit 3:3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

Tit 3:4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,

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## Submit to governments when laws do not violate God's word

Tit 3:5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

Tit 3:6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

Tit 3:7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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## Which laws can Christians violate and still please God?

1. Traffic laws?
2. Tax laws?
3. Building code laws?
4. Copyright laws?
5. Commerce laws?
6. Immigration laws?
7. Challenge – corrupt governments may unfairly enforce or fail to enforce their own laws

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## When civil laws conflict with God's word, we must obey God

Dan 3:15 "Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, lyre, trigon, psaltery and bagpipe and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, very well. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be cast into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire; and what god is there who can deliver you out of my hands?"

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## When civil laws conflict with God's word, we must obey God

Dan 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.

Dan 3:17 "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

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## When civil laws conflict with God's word, we must obey God

Dan 3:18 "But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

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## When civil laws conflict with God's word, we must obey God

Act 5:27 When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them,

Act 5:28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

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## When civil laws conflict with God's word, we must obey God

Act 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.

Act 5:30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

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## When civil laws conflict with God's word, we must obey God

Act 5:31 "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Act 5:32 "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

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## Our citizenship is in heaven

Php 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

Php 3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

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## How Should Christians Behave Toward Governments?

1. Submit to Christ in all relationships including governments

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## Pay taxes

Mat 22:15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted together how they might trap Him in what He said.

Mat 22:16 And they \*sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any.

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## Pay taxes

Mat 22:17 "Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?"

Mat 22:18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?

Mat 22:19 "Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius.

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## Pay taxes

Mat 22:20 And He \*said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"

Mat 22:21 They \*said to Him, "Caesar's."  
Then He \*said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's."

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## Pay taxes

Rom 13:5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

Rom 13:6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

Rom 13:7 Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

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## Pray for all in authority

1Ti 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,  
1Ti 2:2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

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## Pray for all in authority

1Ti 2:3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,  
1Ti 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

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## Use civil laws for justice, protection and promotion of the gospel

- Christians must appeal to governments for justice and mercy never seeking personal revenge
- Notice Paul appeals to Roman authorities for protection against false accusations and attacks from his Jewish enemies
- Ultimately, we should seek protection of law that we may live as Christians and spread the gospel to the lost

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## Use civil laws for justice, protection and promotion of the gospel

Rom 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Rom 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Rom 12:16 Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Rom 12:17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

Rom 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Rom 12:19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Rom 12:20 "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD."

Rom 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Rom 13:1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Rom 13:2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

Rom 13:4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 22:24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, stating that he should be examined by scourging so that he might find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way.

Act 22:25 But when they stretched him out with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?"

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 22:27 The commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes."

Act 22:29 Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him; and the commander also was afraid when he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had put him in chains.

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 23:17 Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, "Lead this young man to the commander, for he has something to report to him."

Act 23:20 And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down tomorrow to the Council, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more thoroughly about him."

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 23:21 "So do not listen to them, for more than forty of them are lying in wait for him who have bound themselves under a curse not to eat or drink until they slay him; and now they are ready and waiting for the promise from you."

Act 23:22 So the commander let the young man go, instructing him, "Tell no one that you have notified me of these things."

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 23:23 And he called to him two of the centurions and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready by the third hour of the night to proceed to Caesarea, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen."

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these *charges*?"

Act 25:10 But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to *the* Jews, as you also very well know."

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Act 25:11 "If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is *true* of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar."

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Use civil laws for justice,  
protection and promotion of  
the gospel

Rom 15:30 Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,

Rom 15:31 that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;

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## Use civil laws for justice, protection and promotion of the gospel

Rom 15:32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.

Rom 15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

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## Respectfully correct government officials

- In a humble gentle and truthful manner, Christians should correct civil officials
- For example – point out unrighteous applications of laws or unrighteousness of laws themselves
- Further we can point out that the Lord Jesus is now above all rulers

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## Respectfully correct government officials

Act 16:20 and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews,

Act 16:21 and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans."

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## Respectfully correct government officials

Act 16:22 The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods.

Act 16:23 When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely;

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## Respectfully correct government officials

Act 16:24 and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Act 16:35 Now when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, "Release those men."

Act 16:36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore come out now and go in peace." 53

## Respectfully correct government officials

Act 16:37 But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us in public without trial, men who are Romans, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they sending us away secretly? No indeed! But let them come themselves and bring us out."

Act 16:38 The policemen reported these words to the chief magistrates. They were afraid when they heard that they were Romans,

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## Respectfully correct government officials

Act 16:39 and they came and appealed to them, and when they had brought them out, they kept begging them to leave the city.

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## Respectfully correct government officials

Joh 19:10 So Pilate \*said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"

Joh 19:11 Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has *the* greater sin."

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## How Should Christians Behave Toward Governments?

1. Submit to Christ in all relationships including governments
2. Pay taxes
3. Pray for all in authority
4. Use civil laws for justice, protection and promotion of the gospel
5. Respectfully correct government officials

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Act 24:24 But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him *speak* about faith in Christ Jesus.

Act 24:25 But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Act 26:19 "So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Act 26:20 but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Act 26:21 "For this reason some Jews seized me in the temple and tried to put me to death.

Act 26:22 "So, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place;

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Act 26:23 that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles."

Act 26:24 While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus \*said in a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad."

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Act 26:25 But Paul \*said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth.

Act 26:26 "For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.

Act 26:27 "King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do."

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Act 26:28 Agrippa replied to Paul, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."

Act 26:29 And Paul said, "I would wish to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains."

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Php 1:12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel,

Php 1:13 so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else,

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Php 1:14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

Php 1:15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will;

Php 1:16 the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel;

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Php 1:17 the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.

Php 1:18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Php 1:19 for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,  
Php 1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

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## Teach the gospel to all even those in governments

Php 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.  
Php 4:22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

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## To what extent can Christians be involved with governments?

- This is the hardest part of these lessons on government
- Many things related to interacting with governments are not mentioned in the Word of God such as jury duty
- Others are mentioned such as the possibility of holding a job or even a political position with government

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## To what extent can Christians be involved with governments?

- Among brethren, there is much controversy on many of these possible topics especially whether a Christian can defend themselves or others with deadly force or serve in the Armed Forces or law enforcement agencies using deadly force when needed
- For any given topic, brethren are going to differ as to how a Christian should behave toward government

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## Is it right for Christians to

1. Work for governments either in political or civil positions?
2. Vote in elections?
3. Serve as jurors in trials including those that might involve the death penalty?
4. Defend ourselves and others by deadly force?
5. Serve in Armed Forces or law enforcement using deadly force?

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## Some Biblical Principles We Must Follow In Relating To Governments

1. Whatever we do, do all in the name (authority) of the Lord Jesus
2. When governments demand disobedience to God, we must obey God rather than men
3. In matters unclear or not mentioned in the Scriptures, we must leave room for individuals to act according to their consciences before God

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## Do all by the authority of Christ

Col 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

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## We must obey God rather than men

Act 5:27 When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them,

Act 5:28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

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## We must obey God rather than men

Act 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.

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## An example of A Christian working in government

Rom 16:23 Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

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## Individual Christians must freely act in good conscience in matters of opinion

Rom 14:1 Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.

Rom 14:2 One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.

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## Individual Christians must freely act in good conscience in matters of opinion

Rom 14:3 The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

Rom 14:4 Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

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Individual Christians must freely act  
in good conscience in matters of  
opinion

Rom 14:5 One person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

Rom 14:6 He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

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Individual Christians must freely act  
in good conscience in matters of  
opinion

Rom 14:13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

Rom 14:14 I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

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Individual Christians must freely act  
in good conscience in matters of  
opinion

Rom 14:15 For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.

Rom 14:20 Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense.

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Individual Christians must freely act  
in good conscience in matters of  
opinion

Rom 14:21 It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.

Rom 14:22 The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

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Individual Christians must freely act  
in good conscience in matters of  
opinion

Rom 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

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Live a righteous life daily

Pro 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to any people.

Act 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

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## Live a righteous life daily

Act 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

Act 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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## Live a righteous life daily

Act 2:41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

Act 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Mat 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

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## Live a righteous life daily

Act 8:22 "Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.

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## Live a righteous life daily

Php 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Php 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

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## How Should Christians Behave Toward Governments?

1. Submit to Christ in all relationships including governments
2. Pay taxes
3. Pray for all in authority
4. Use civil laws for justice, protection and promotion of the gospel
5. Respectfully correct government officials
6. Teach the gospel to all even those in governments
7. To what extent can Christians be involved with governments?
8. Live a righteous life daily

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