**A Christian View of Civil Government
8-15-2021**

1. Romans 13:1-7 is prescriptive regarding civil authority and not necessarily descriptive of all civil authorities.
2. God commands every individual to be in subjection to the governing authorities. Rom. 13:1, Rom. 13:5, I Pet. 2:13-14
3. In the context of a civil authority (as in all contexts), the “good works” (v.3), “evil” (v.3), “good” (v.3), “evil” (v.4). and “evil” (v.4), are to be defined by God’s word. Deut. 4:5-8, Ps. 2:10-12, Ps. 119:46, Prov. 16:12, I Tim. 1:8
4. If a civil authority legislates contrary to God’s word, such legislation is not legitimate. It must be disobeyed. Ex. 1:17, Dan. 3:16-18, Dan 6:10, Acts 4:19, Acts 5:29.
5. Civil authorities have a distinct and God-ordained sphere in which their authority is legitimate.
	1. In Old Testament Israel, God ordained a distinction between the King’s sphere of authority and that of the priests. I Chron. 29, II Chron. 19:11, II Chron. 26:16:18
	2. God has granted complete authority to the civil authority (I Pet. 2:13-14), Masters (Col. 3:22), Husbands (Eph. 5:24), Parents (Eph. 3:20), Church leaders (Heb. 13:17). We must necessarily deduce from these passages that the comprehensive submission owed to each authority is comprehensive within their God-ordained sphere.
	3. Jesus limits the sphere of the civil authorities by declaring “give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.”
6. When a God-ordained human authority legislates outside of their God-ordained sphere, their commands may be viewed as non-binding by Christians. However, it may be wise to submit to such commands for the sake of peace. Matt. 17:24-27
7. **Summary:** All people are obligated to contentedly submit to civil authorities when their legislation is not contrary to the Word of God and when it is within their God-ordained sphere. The boundaries of the civil authority’s sphere must be drawn by God’s word. II Tim. 3:16-17 ( Also, note Scripture references under #3 above)
8. Contemporary Application:

\* Except in a few rare circumstances, Civil authorities are operating outside of their God ordained sphere and may be resisted when they attempt to legislate an individual's medical decisions. (Decisions relative to vaccinations, mask wearing, social distancing etc.. are decisions that are within the authority sphere of the individual or family).

\*Except in a few rare circumstances, Civil authorities are acting outside of their God ordained sphere and may be resisted when they attempt to regulate or hinder the public or private meeting, teaching, preaching, singing, fellowship or worship of the church.

\*Except in a few rare circumstances, Civil authorities are acting contrary to the word of God and should be resisted when they attempt to exercise authority over the academic or intellectual development of children in opposition to parental desires

\*Civil authorities are acting contrary to the word of God and should be resisted when they attempt to compel speech of any kind.

\*Civil authorities are acting contrary to the word of God and should be resisted when they attempt to conscript or register women for present or future military service.

1. In all interactions with civil authorities and with others who disagree with our views, we should be marked by:
* Humility (I Pet. 5:5, Pr. 29:23)
* Wisdom/Understanding (Prov. 18:13, 17)
* Grace (Col. 4:6, Eph. 4:29)