



# The Christians Role in Government

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Many Christians point to Romans 13 as support for abstaining from civil disobedience, even extending to such recent issues as mask mandates and church closures.

However, this view fails to properly interpret this passage and apply it in a specifically American context. The passage clearly teaches that the concept of government comes from God and civil authority exists to secure peace and order in society. God intends government to wield its authority for good (which is defined in God's character) and not for evil.

The question for believers in America is, "Who is the governing authority?"

The founding fathers built a system entrusting the people with the power to elect the governing authority – which means American believers participate in establishing a government that reflects God's design in Romans 13. As the preamble to the Constitution reads: *"We, the people of the United States in order to form a more perfect union establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."*

***Christians not only have a right to participate in government but also a biblical mandate to stand up to government that infringes on God-given liberties.*** Romans 13 does not command unlimited submission to government that perpetrates evil. Such a government has violated its God-given mandate to function for good. Failure to appreciate this distinction has led many Christians in America to relinquish their responsibility to resist unbiblical and unconstitutional laws. As a result, evil has triumphed in many aspects of society.

Only God merits complete obedience, and when believers understand this, they'll be empowered to strengthen and support government that reflects his justice and goodness in society.

## Reflection Questions

1. What is the danger of submitting blindly to government and allowing authorities unlimited powers?
2. Who are some people, both in the Bible and in our country's history, who have stood up to authorities in a biblical way? What were the results?
3. How can your church simultaneously respect the God-given concept of governing authorities while also resisting infringement on God-given liberties?