If This Is What the Government Does,
I See Why We Need the Church- Romans 13:1-7
(page 948; Children's Bible page 1414)
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Our series continues: *Healthy: Life & Church in Romans 12-16*
- This sermon contrasts the government and the church. How are they different?

Many new Christians were bound to think (wrongly) that the faith was **anti-government:**
- Here are six reasons why...

Many positive things said about the governing authorities in our passage: We all need to "be subject" to them because God "instituted" and "appointed" them (13:1-2). Those who "resist" will "incur judgement" (13:2). He is "God's servant for your good" (13:4), and they are "ministers of God." (13:6)

Three institutions founded by God: The government (Rom 13:1-7), the church (Matt 16:18), the family (Gen 1-2). Each has their own special role constituting a differentiated society.

What does the government have to do with God's vengeance? Compare these passages:
- Last week: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves... "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." (12-9)

- This week: The government is an "avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer" (13:4)
  - Note "the sword" in 13:4, a lethal instrument
  - This means there's *divine* justice in the government's proper labors.

Justice...that takes us to last week and three levels of ethics:

- Level 1: "Enlightened self-interest."

- Level 2: Justice. **The government functions here.**

- Level 3: A Gospel Ethic, which is Beyond Justice.

  - Examples: forgiveness, charity, mercy, self-foregetfulness, self-sacrifice - even martyrdom. This is all about the cross of Christ, where God exemplified these things to save us!

  - **The church witnesses to these things!** And thus becomes salt, light

Application:

- Pray for your leaders! (1 Tim 2:2)

- We are salt and light in this world (Matt 5:13-16), and can we now see better why Jesus has called us this?

  - A level 3 (Gospel) Ethic, which brings healing into a world filled with injustices - and sometimes paralyzed by them.