

1. Motivate

What do you recall about your initial experiences with a presidential election?

2. Transition

Politics can bring out best and worst of people.

- You may feel passionate, you may feel cynical about the whole thing.
- As believers, we are called to reflect Christ in how you interact with politics and government.

3. Bible Study

An introductory video is available. View at https://watch.liberty.edu/media/1_68iou608

3.1 Obey the Government

Listen for how to respond to government.

Romans 13:1-4 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. 4 For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

According to this passage, what should a Christian do to maintain a good relationship with the government?

Why has God ordained government and laws?

What are some reasons the passage gives for submission to government authorities?

What kinds of experiences in our culture can cause people to hesitate about submitting to governing authorities?

We should be very careful advocating resistance to civil authority ... what Biblical examples can you think of that would give us guidelines?

God said the government authority is actually a servant. Why is that title an appropriate title? How has the government been beneficial to you?

3.2 Integrity, Respect, and Honor

Listen for how to submit to government.

Romans 13:5-7 (NIV) Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. 6 This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 7 Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

What is another, and even better, motivation for making one's self subject to the governing authorities?

What are specific ways in which Christians can fulfill their obligation toward the government?

What reason does Paul offer for doing so?

Why is it important for us to respect and honor those in authority, even when we don't agree?

What is the Christian's responsibility for maintaining a good government? What positive support should Christians give to government leaders?

3.3 Respond with Love

Listen for what is the fulfillment of the law.

Romans 13:8-10 (NIV) Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. 9 The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

What inescapable obligations do believers have toward one another?

What is the relationship of love to the law?

What did Paul say love would not do?

How does loving others disarm an argument?

How can we keep political differences from being divisive?

What specific acts of love can Christians show to friends, family, neighbors, and strangers especially during this political season?

