

4. How does reading this passage in light of Daniel 4 offer insights into this passage?

5. How is your perspective on public advocacy for justice and protest and civil disobedience informed by Daniel 4:27 and Acts 4:18-20 and 5:29? Please reread those passages before answering.

6. What does it mean to you to be a follower of Jesus and a good citizen based on these passages and other teachings in the Bible?

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## SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

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The Fellowship of the Gospel (A Series on Romans 12-16)  
"Christians and Governmental Authorities"  
Romans 13:1-7

### **Does Romans 13:1-7 demand \_\_\_\_\_ obedience to the government? Does it forbid protesting or acts of civil disobedience?**

Whatever else Paul is trying to communicate here, the main thing is that he considered the world's governments (even the Roman government) to be legitimate authorities established by God in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's sovereignty.

People who have a vested interest in keeping the status quo have used Paul's words to support the status quo without embracing Paul's other teachings or \_\_\_\_\_.

It's disturbing many Christians use this passage \_\_\_\_\_.

We should also be disturbed by and concerned that a growing number of professing Christians are advocating for \_\_\_\_\_ to achieve political ends, oftentimes based on lies and conspiracies and avoiding the hard work of working for change in lawful ways.

1. Paul's words actually undermine and \_\_\_\_\_ the authority of rulers and governments.

Daniel 4:24-28

Romans 15: <sup>12</sup> And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope."

This passage, without a doubt, \_\_\_\_\_ to Daniel 4, and it subverts governmental power while affirming the need for governments and for law and order.

"[N.T.] Wright contends that 13:1-7 is about establishing a community right under Caesar's nose in Rome that witnesses to the work of the one true God, but avoids the view that loyalty to Jesus would mean civil disobedience in a way that would just reshuffle the cards of political order. Rome could cope with ordinary revolutions, but a community committed to the crucified and risen Lord, living out his story and teachings – now that was dangerous!" (Michael Bird)

It's been pointed out by some that little could Nero have imagined that a day would come when people would call their sons "Paul" and their \_\_\_\_\_ "Nero."

2. The Bible clearly teaches that we must \_\_\_\_\_ God over everything and everyone else.

Sometimes obeying God \_\_\_\_\_ civil disobedience.

Acts 4:18-20; 5:29

### Protests and Civil Disobedience

- Some might limit protesting or civil disobedience to cases parallel to the biblical cases offered in the Bible, but be careful not to interpret this too narrowly.

"We must obey God rather than human beings!" That's a pretty \_\_\_\_\_ statement.

- Remember that our governmental system is drastically \_\_\_\_\_ than Rome's.

We have much more responsibility when it comes to holding the government accountable, advocating for justice.

### Some Applications to Everyday Life

- Respect, honor, and \_\_\_\_\_ for governmental authorities. (Romans 13:7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; 1 Peter 2:13-17)
- If the government's demands and God's are at \_\_\_\_\_, do what God says, but do so with great discernment and in light of the whole counsel of God. (Acts 4:18-20; 5:29).
- In a participatory system of government like we have, we have an even greater responsibility to advocate for \_\_\_\_\_ and hold the authorities accountable to justice. (Daniel 4:27)

"Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed" (Daniel 4:27)

Resources:

1. *Compassion (&) Conviction: The AND Campaign's Guide to Faithful Civic Engagement* by Justin Giboney, Michael Wear, Chris Butler, Chapter 8: "Advocacy (&) Protest"
2. *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope* by Esau McCaulley, Chapter 2: "Freedom is No Fear—the New Testament and a Theology of Policing."

### Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

2. Who is one of your heroes who stood up to the government for the sake of God's mission and for justice?

3. Read Romans 13:1-7. What statements in this passage disturb and/or encourage you?