

Understanding the Lord's Will for the Government
(Ephesians 5:17)

Introduction:

1. This verse teaches us to "understand what the will of the Lord is."
2. We are able to learn the Lord's will through careful Bible study.
3. In addition to learning the Lord's will and understanding it, we are to obey it (Matthew 7:21).
4. Last week we studied passages that help us understand the Lord's will for the family.
5. Today we are concentrating on passages that help us in "understanding the Lord's will for the government."

Discussion:

- I. THE OLD TESTAMENT HELPS US UNDERSTAND THE LORD'S WILL FOR THE GOVERNMENT
 - A. When God gave instructions for the family He said that the earth was to be "replenished" [filled] (Genesis 1:28; 9:1).
 - B. As the earth was populated, cities and nations began to develop with their own leaders.
 1. We learn from Genesis 12 that Abraham went to Egypt because of a famine, and the leader of Egypt was Pharaoh.
 2. In Genesis 14 a number of cities are listed with their kings (vs.1-2), including "Melchizedek king of Salem" (vs.18-20).
 - C. God ordained government as a means of ruling people (Romans 13:1).
 - D. This does not mean that God approves of all systems of government; however, He has ordained government as a means of ruling people.
 - E. The rest of the Old Testament tells about a number of kingdoms and the kings who ruled them.
 - F. We need to point out something that was revealed in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (Daniel 4:17).
- II. JESUS HELPS US UNDERSTAND THE LORD'S WILL FOR THE GOVERNMENT
 - A. In Matthew 20:25 Jesus acknowledged the chain of command used in the Roman government.
 - B. In Matthew 22:15-22 Jesus stated that responsibilities to the government are to be fulfilled.
 - C. Earlier, Jesus used an interesting method to pay tribute (Matthew 17:24-27).
 - D. During the Lord's trial before Pilate, He stated that Pilate's authority as governor had come from God (John 19:8-11).

Conclusion:

1. Lord willing, this evening we will study several passages from the New Testament that help us understand the Lord's will for the government.
 - a. The Bible points out the responsibilities of government leaders.
 - b. Our responsibilities to the government are also revealed.
2. Let us close with some sobering words from the Old Testament.
 - a. Isaiah 5:20-21
 - b. Psalm 9:17
 - c. Psalm 33:12
 - d. 2 Chronicles 7:14