

# The 5th Commandment and Civil Authorities

## The Purpose of Civil Government

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Q: What is the **purpose** of civil government?

A1: The civil government is God's \_\_\_\_\_ of justice (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17)

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- Governing authorities are God's deacon (Rom 13:4, 6)
  - God is sovereign (Creator, Sustainer, Governor)
  - The first family: Adam and Eve

Q: What do governing authorities exist to do?

(1) Administer \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ the weak (Ps 92; Dan 4:27)

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ the criminal (1 Thess 4:1-8; Eccl. 8:10-13)

(4) \_\_\_\_\_ civic good (1 Sam 8:10-18; 12:1-5; Deut 16:18-20; Ps 26:9; 15:27; 17:23; Isa 33:15-16; Ezek 22:6-13; Amos 5:12; Hab 1:1)

(5) \_\_\_\_\_ taxes

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What are some biblical principles of justice?

Who are "the weak" in our society?

What are ways government punishes unduly?

What are ways that government is soft on criminals?

What are examples of Christians undermining God's means of administering his wrath through civil authorities?

What are examples of the "common civic good"?

What are ways government could approve the "common good"?

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## How Civil Government Deacons Justice

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Q: How does civil government minister God's justice?

A1: The civil government wisely \_\_\_\_\_ God's standard of justice (Rom 13:1-7)

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• By what \_\_\_\_\_ ?

1. Standard option #1: God

• Recall what we know about God (Rom 13:1-5; Mal 3:5-7; Ps 111:7; Deut 32:4):

• God is \_\_\_\_\_ to as the authority of justice (Ex 18:15-16; Deut 17:8ff)

2. Standard option #2: Mankind

- What happens when mankind tries to be the source of the standard (Genesis 3)?

• Sources of God's revealed Law

1. \_\_\_\_\_ revelation: Natural Law

2. \_\_\_\_\_ revelation: Scripture

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God provides the standard of what is the civil good. What are the blessings of this?

What are other problems with mankind being the source of laws?      What is the standard of good and bad in Romans 13?

Where does respect for human life originate?      What kinds of laws should be on the books?

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Q: How does civil government minister God's justice?

A2: The civil government \_\_\_\_\_ transgressions with the \_\_\_\_\_

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- Civil instrument of authority: The sword

- Biblical motives for punishment:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ (Deut 13:11)

2. \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor 5:51-5; Prov 22:15)

3. \_\_\_\_\_ (Exod 21-22)

4. \_\_\_\_\_ ()

5. \_\_\_\_\_ ()

6. \_\_\_\_\_ (Exod 21:23-25)

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Are you tempted to overlook any of these motives? What happens when there is an imbalance between these motives?

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- Distinguish \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt 5:21-30; Acts 4:18-20)

- Is \_\_\_\_\_ biblically ethical?

- Principles of \_\_\_\_\_ (Exod 21:18-22:15; Lev 6:1-7; Lk 19; Eph 4:28)

- One biblical solution: \_\_\_\_\_ servitude (Exod 22:1-3)

- Benefits of restitution:

- Capital punishment...

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Where are people tempted to *criminalize* all sin and overdo punishment?

Are you persuaded the imprisonment is not the most ethical approach to civil punishment? Either way, how might we go about making prison reform of our current system in America, with all of its problems?

Can you think of how punishment as restitution would reform our current judicial system?

Brainstorm all sorts of types of punishment

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