

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: January 6, 2019

SUBJECT: HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: GOVERNMENT (1 of 2)—Why We Need Government

SCRIPTURE: Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Genesis 2:16-17; 9:6; 1 Peter 2:13-14

AIM: Government is in place by God for our good. We need government to restrict evil, to execute judgment on evil doers and make the earth a more peaceable place to live so we can fulfill God's purpose.

MEMORY VERSES: Romans 13:1-2 (1 Let every person be subject to the authorities over *him*, for there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are ordained by God. 2 So then he who resists the authority opposes God's ordination, and those who oppose will receive judgment to themselves.) (*shorten to Romans 13:1a for younger grades*); Titus 3:1 (Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work,); 1 Peter 2:13a (Be subject to every human institution for the Lord's sake,...)

SUGGESTED SONGS: 9528 *BSS Vessels Unto Honor Song #8* (There's a Reason for the Rule); 2829 (Honor and Respect for Authority); 57 (He Cannot Fail); 3104 (He is the King of Kings); 9018 *God's Design Song #18* (May Jehovah Bless You!); 9317 (On Top of My Palace); 9311 (Let the Name of God Be Blessed)

CRAFT IDEAS: (1) Create a poster with a decorative border listing various rules at home and/or at school (such as not interrupting when someone is speaking, sharing toys, cleaning up after yourself, throwing out your trash, not talking with our mouths full, put shoes away, etc.). (2) Prepare traffic signs (for example 'STOP', Railroad Crossing, One Way) from cardstock or construction paper and cut them out and glue onto craft sticks or create a collage with them.

APPROACH: Have the children make a list of all the rules they can think of that have been set up in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods and by the city, state and federal governments. What happens when the rules and laws are obeyed? Show examples of traffic signs and ask the children what they mean. What happens when they are ignored? For example, if a street sign says 'ONE WAY' or 'DO NOT ENTER' and someone enters, what may happen?

CONTENT: Before man sinned he was ruled directly by God and lived under the authority of the word of God (Genesis 2:16-17). After Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God, sin entered into the world (Romans 5:19). All of Adam's descendants have a fallen, sinful nature. Adam's son, Cain, killed his own brother, Abel. Eventually sin was everywhere and filled the earth. All kinds of unrighteous, unfair, and sinful things came from man. God had to make some way to restrict man's evil doings, to judge the evil doings, to judge the evil doers and to reward those who do good. God Himself established human government, that is, that men should be under some form of rule and laws. Because man did not live under God's rule, God placed men under the rule and judgment of other men (Genesis 9:6), that is, under human government.

God has established human government to rule over the sinful and fallen mankind (Romans 13:1-4). If there were no government, the entire earth would be in absolute disorder and under complete lawlessness. Imagine what it would be like if there were no policemen. The strong and the wicked would devour the weak and the righteous like wolves do sheep. If there were no policemen to enforce traffic laws, would it be safe to drive? What would life be like if there were no order? What if the nurses did not report to work in the hospitals; if the sanitation workers did not remove the trash and recycling in our neighborhoods? God has established human government to rule over man so that evil would be restricted and good would be rewarded (Romans 13:3-4; 1 Peter 2:14). Government is to protect man from total lawlessness and destruction, so we can live peacefully and serve God (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

In order to carry out all the duties of the government there is the need of many officers and others who serve the public, such as:

- a) Rulers: kings, presidents, governors, mayors, etc.
- b) Lawmakers
- c) Law enforcement officers: police, sheriff, FBI, TSA (at the airports), etc.
- d) Judges
- e) Prisons: prison guards and wardens
- f) Military forces (Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force)
- g) Public services (fire department, teachers, mail carriers, etc.)

Those who live peacefully and obediently are neither afraid of nor resist the government. Those who do evil and are disobedient toward the government are actually sinning against God Himself, for it was God who established the government to rule over man for Him.

SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM: *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

We should recognize that we have a sinful, lawless nature. Rules and laws have been set up by God to help restrain man's evil nature so that a peaceful environment can be maintained around us. We should not be lawless people. We should obey the rules and laws that have been established around us.

- **At home:** There is a kind of government at home with rules set up by our parents. For example, there may be rules about going to bed at a certain time, watching only a certain amount of TV or spending only a certain amount of time on the computer or playing video games. We may have been designated to take out the garbage or wash the dishes. We may be responsible to clean our rooms, make our beds, etc.
- **At school:** There are many rules at our schools. We must be at school on time. We may have to sit in an assigned seat. We must do homework. We must be quiet at certain times. We must listen to our teachers, principals, assistant principals, school aides, and security guards at our schools.
- **In our neighborhoods:** We should not litter. We need to recycle certain materials. We cannot make excessive noise during certain hours. We cannot leave our bicycles or toys lying on the sidewalk, etc.
- **Government rules:** All children are entitled to a public school education in the United States. We must go to school. We must participate in fire drills and lockdown drills. We must wear seatbelts in cars. We must be immunized against certain diseases, etc.

When we cooperate with the various forms of government God has arranged around us, we are cooperating with God Himself and give Him the opportunity to further His purpose. We also are a great testimony to all around us to show that we agree with God's arrangement and submit ourselves to His rule.

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ in God's Economy—Human Relationships*, Vol. 3, Lesson 19, and the Church in New York City Children's Meeting lessons, 12/21/97; 1/6/02; 12/30/07, 01/12/14