

# Authority

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 00 ]     ■■■■ Smith Ian Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Hi.

Welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. I'm Judy Schultz, and I'm sitting here at the back of the sanctuary by our prayer table. If you're new to our church, please pick up a welcome folder at our connection site.

For everyone attending our service today, please fill out our little friendship card. Include your name, contact information, especially if you would like one of our church newsletters.

[ 2 : 02 ]     On the back, you can ask for prayer requests, share blessings, or leave notes for our staff. Enjoy the service and welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church.

Good morning, everybody. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Shall we pray together? Dear God in heaven, we just pray that you'll pour a special blessing into this place. To touch us, move us, fill us with your Holy Spirit, and help us to experience the living God.

[ 3 : 23 ]     In all that we do, all that we say, all that we pray, all that we sing. Come and be with us, Lord Jesus. Amen. I'd like to invite you, if you're able, to stand as we're going to sing together. All creatures of our God and King.

Lift up your voice and with us sing.

Oh, praise ye. Alleluia. Oh, praise ye. Oh, praise ye.

Oh, praise ye. Oh, praise ye. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Alleluia. Dear Mother earth. Alleluia. Alleluia.

[ 4 : 45 ]     blessings on our way. Alleluia, alleluia. The applause and fruits at Him may grow.

Let them God's glory also show. Oh, praise He, oh, praise He. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

All ye who are of tender heart, forgiving others take your part. Oh, praise He, alleluia.

Ye who long pain and sorrow bear, praise God and on Him cast your care. Oh, praise He, oh, praise He.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Let all things that create our flesh and worship Him among us.

[ 6 : 03 ]     Oh, praise He, alleluia. Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, free and finally.

Oh, praise He, oh, praise He. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The Lord be with you. And I'll be with you. Please be seated. I want to share just two things. First of all, that rumor about the idea that our service was going to start later, I don't know who started that, but, oh, that was me.

We're not doing that. If you haven't noticed, we're not doing that. So our service time is staying at 11.15, just so all of you know that, all right? I did want to share about our mission moment this morning.

First of all, we have a mission moment offering for our young people. This is actually to provide scholarships. All the young people in our church who go to college are eligible for a scholarship if they'd like to apply, and this helps to provide for that.

[ 7 : 18 ] So I'm both telling you, if you're a young person going to college, you can get a scholarship, but also saying if you'd like to support that, that's what this envelope is for. But I know some of you are concerned about the hurricanes because we've seen such devastation and such destruction.

At this point in time, it's too early for us to formally take up an offering. So what we're doing is we're going to take up an offering in two weeks. In two weeks, we'll take up an offering for that.

But if you feel moved that you want to give an offering to help with that, because the Methodist Church is already working on that disaster relief, you can either just write a check and write UMCOR on it, or write hurricane, or put it in an envelope and write that, and they'll make sure that that goes towards that offering.

Okay? Thank you. Pastor Lisa? Good morning. The clipboards that are going around are about our upcoming prayer vigil at the end of this month. Take a look in your bulletin because there's information.

The prayer vigil is being done a little bit differently this time around. The prayer team is trying some different things to make things interesting and to make things meaningful for us.

[ 8 : 27 ] So as you're looking at that clipboard, you'll notice that the way we're signing up and what you're signing up for is a little different depending on what time of day it is. There's going to be a worship service that is specifically aimed at prayer in which we will be praying for folks right smack in the middle of it all, and we're hoping that it will be a meaningful time for everyone.

So please take a look. If you have any questions, I'm the one to direct questions to or any of the members of the prayer team as well. We also want to let you know that the adult fellowship group, adults are meeting and gathering tomorrow evening for a potluck.

So if you consider yourself to be an adult, you are welcome to come at 6 o'clock for a potluck. Just bring a dish to pass and all adults are welcome to come and we're going to have a time of fellowship and of sharing and also to hear about the upcoming events for adult fellowship in the church.

Adult fellowship meets the second Monday evening of every month, except in the summer, I think. So you want to make sure that you're coming up for that. What praises do you have this morning?

I'm excited to be back. I haven't been here in three weeks. I've been all over the place and different things going on, but I am blessed to be back home with this congregation. What are you thankful for today?

[ 9 : 50 ] Yes. Amen.

Answer to prayer for healing, healing of prostate cancer. That is a wonderful thing. Any others? Yes, Judith. Oh, wonderful.

I just needed to have a prayer for you as well. The blessing. The blessing. The blessing of God's love being shown with help. Just help getting your car fixed so that you can get where you need to go.

That is a blessing. Any other joys to share this morning? We know that we are overflowing with God's blessings. Amen? Amen. Let's return some of those blessings back to God in our gifts, tithes, and offerings.

strength. Who breaks the power of sin and darkness, whose love is mighty and so much stronger, the King of glory, the King above all kings.

[ 11 : 45 ] Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder and leaves us breathless in awe and wonder, the King of glory, the King above all kings.

This is amazing grace. This is unfailing love. That you would take my place.

That you would bear my cross. You laid down your life. That I would be set free.

Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me. Who brings our chaos back into order?

Who makes the orphan a son and daughter? The King of glory. The King of glory. Who rules the nations with truth and justice?

[ 13 : 13 ] Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance. The King of glory. The King of glory. The King above all kings.

This is amazing grace. This is unfailing love. Amen.

To the King of glory. Jesus. The King of glory.

See you. Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.

Worthy is the King who conquered the grave. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain. Worthy is the King who conquered the grave.

[ 14 : 26 ] Worthy is the Lamb who was slain. Worthy is the King who conquered the grave. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.

Worthy, worthy, worthy. Oh, this is amazing grace. This is unfailing love.

Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me. Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.

Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me. All that you've done for me.

Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me. Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.

[ 15 : 42 ] Oh, Jesus, every one that you've done for me. Oh, Jesus, I play that too. Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me.

Oh, Jesus, I sing for all that you've done for me. Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day, for the opportunity to gather together and worship you, to know that you are with us, and that you will touch our hearts this day so that we can continue to bless others.

Lord, we just pray in Jesus' name that the gifts that you have given us so abundantly would be gifts we are willing to share. Bless them, Lord God.

We hold them up before you, Lord God, and say, use us, work through us, so that our gifts might be a blessing to this world, drawing many to salvation in Jesus Christ.

Lord, we pray also over this offering of our substance, Lord. We ask that you would bless it, multiply it, give us wisdom to know how to best use it for the furtherance of your kingdom.

[ 17 : 26 ] And we ask especially that you would bless the offering for student scholarships, Lord. We just ask that everyone who is needing to go to school would have the ability to do so.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. With these concerns and those that are on your heart that were not voiced aloud, let's turn to the Lord in prayer.

You're welcome to join me from your seat or at the rail. Lord God, we come before you, knowing that you know what we need before we even ask, and even that we are often not sure how to ask.

But we trust that you know us. We trust that you know our hearts. We trust that you know, even when we're in silent prayer.

Be with us and help us, Lord. We pray for those, Lord God, who are in need of having forgiveness in our hearts.

[ 18 : 47 ] Sometimes we don't even recognize it. We don't realize the things that we're holding on to. We need your love and grace to work in us and through us so that we can let go of those things that we harbor resentment for, that we harbor bitterness for.

Where we have been hurt by someone. And we're having trouble just letting that go. We all struggle with those things from time to time, Lord.

And we pray in Jesus' name, take that from us so that we may be free to give our whole selves over to you and to allow your great love and mercy to flow in us and through us to all people, whoever they may be in our lives.

whatever may have happened between us. And Lord, I pray in Jesus' name that you would help us to understand that as we offer up prayers for forgiveness, asking, Lord, and repenting of our sin, that you would wash it away and make us whole.

Help us to be able to accept the forgiveness that you pour out into us. and we pray, Lord God, for those who are sick and infirm.

[ 20 : 22 ] For those who are in need of healing from cancers, from colds, from conditions of the body that make us vulnerable to sickness and disease. Help, Lord.

Touch each one with your spirit of healing. Give wisdom to all the medical professionals and caregivers working with these folks who are in need.

Be with them. Help them, Lord. And pray, Father, for those who are grieving losses of all kinds, who are sad in the depths of their being, with a sadness they can't express.

you know what that is, Lord. You know our hearts. You know what we're experiencing. You know what we're feeling.

Help us to take comfort in that. To know that you are with us as we continue to walk on in this life, even in the midst of grief.

[ 21 : 28 ] bring us peace. Bring compassion. Bring relief. Thank you, Lord God, for the opportunity to pray for all of those who are enduring loss because of disasters of all kinds.

From fires, Lord God, from floods, from hurricanes, from those kinds of disasters that people bring upon each other in outbursts of violence.

We just pray, Lord, that you would touch each one. Help them. Send help to them. We pray for the United Methodist Committee on Relief, that they would be well able, equipped, and empowered by you and by the resources that you have provided them to bring the relief that people need.

We ask for your help, Lord, in our own lives as we seek to become more like you. Help us, Lord God, to set aside those things of this life, to set aside the distractions that keep us from doing and being the people that you have called us to be.

keeping us from doing the things you are calling us to. Let this service transform us, Lord.

[ 23 : 04 ] As we sing songs of praise, as we pray prayers of faith, as we partake of the sacrament of Holy Communion, as we hear the word spoken out and preached, Lord, we just pray in Jesus' name.

that you would make us new. Lord, that you would make us new. Direct us where you would have us be. Give us words and actions that operate out of your unfailing love as you help us to shine light in dark places, wherever you're calling us to, Lord.

be with Pastor Thomas. He gives the message today and with all who will be ministering. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Good morning. Good morning. Today's reading is from the book of Romans, chapter 13, verses 1 through 7. Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted.

[ 24 : 28 ] And those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 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 you will be commended. For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid.

For rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment, but also as a matter of conscience.

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them.

[ 25 : 30 ] If you owe taxes, pay taxes. If revenue, then revenue. If respect, then respect. If honor, then honor.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Sue. This scripture is brought to you by the sponsorship of the Republican and Democratic parties of the United States of America.

You know, when I preach a sermon nowadays, when I have one that's a little tricky, I tend to look back to see, what did I do with it years ago?

So I look back 35 years. I've never preached on this passage in 35 years. So then I thought I'd look up what other people seem to think about it, and I discovered something interesting about this passage.

And all the lectionaries of all the denominations and all the passages they choose so that they cover the whole scripture, nobody chooses this passage. So this is one of those ones we just don't talk about.

[ 26 : 29 ] It's in the book of Romans, though, and we're studying the book of Romans, so here we are. We have a passage that says to us, let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there's no authority except that which God has established.

Now, this passage is quite unusual, particularly because of the person writing it. The apostle Paul was beaten by the authorities. He was imprisoned by the authorities.

He was accused. And yet he wrote this. Governments are established by God. Actually, that's the biblical model.

We read about it in the book of Judges in the Old Testament. And the original idea God had was that whenever we have a particular circumstance, he'll raise up the leader we need.

So he raised up Deborah. He raised up Gideon. He raised up Samson. Most people would never have chosen as a leader. He picked the one that they needed for that particular issue and raised them up to lead the people.

[ 27 : 35 ] That's the closest thing to democracy we have in the Bible. But the people in the Bible didn't like that idea. And they said, we want to be like the other nations around us.

So we want a king. Like everybody else has a king. And that leads us to our character for this morning from the Old Testament. Anybody want to guess?

It was the first king of Israel. He stood a foot taller than everybody else. Saul. King Saul. Saul. Yes.

When the people of Israel said, we want a king like everybody else has a king, it became obvious that the best king that they could have was this big, tall, tough guy. Right?

He could lead us in battle. The people would respect him. So God had Samuel anoint Saul to be king. To tell the people what to do.

[ 28 : 35 ] He said, you won't like the king. Because the king is going to take your money and the king is going to take your stuff and the king is going to tell you what to do and you won't like it. But you wanted a king instead of me.

One of the interesting things is that we kind of have an idea, especially as Americans, that governments are chosen by the people, that we make the decision who will be the rulers and the leaders in the world.

But the book of Daniel actually says to us in chapter 2, God changes times and seasons. He deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

God raises up the leaders and the kings serve at his discretion. And if they don't, he takes them out. All governments are established, it says here, by God.

That's the good news, by the way. What it means is that God didn't just like set us on a course in history and turn us loose. He actually is still paying attention. God still has his hand in this world we live in so we can trust that God won't let these people that sometimes do things wrong go too far because God is still in control.

[ 29 : 53 ] in fact, even Jesus standing before Pilate after Pilate said to him, don't you understand I have the ability to crucify you. Jesus responded by saying you would have no power over me if it were not given to you by God above.

God makes the decisions. Now why does God do that? Well in verse 3 it says, for the rulers hold no terror for those who do right but for those who do wrong.

Do you want to be free from the fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right. You see the truth is governments are established so that people will do the right thing because God doesn't like disorder.

God doesn't like chaos. If you read the very first book of the Bible in the beginning of time God says I'm going to make the world in an orderly reasonable logical rational fashion.

It isn't just whatever. There will be a purpose for it. God doesn't like whatever. I was driving down the road the other day and I was pulling up towards the stop side.

[ 31 : 04 ] It was one of those four way stops and a car went right past me. I'm like where's a cop when you need have you ever thought that? Where's a cop when you need one?

They didn't pause and slow down they just stayed full speed heading right through. Can you imagine if everybody did that? Can you imagine what would happen if we just had no rules nobody cared we just did whatever we felt like everybody just did whatever.

It would be a crazy world wouldn't it? God doesn't believe in a world of chaos. God doesn't want that so God gave us a world where there are governments and authorities who are intended by design to help us to do what's right.

And so we look to our governments to do good things for us. The other day I got in the car my wife usually drives and I was having trouble figuring out how the windshield wipers work even though I've been in this car before.

Don't you hate that? Why doesn't the government make a rule that every windshield wiper in a car has to work exactly the same? Amen? You know? We don't like the government telling us what to do unless it's something we really would like them to do.

[ 32 : 26 ] Right? And then they're good. But you see that's why God established governments in the first place. So we'd have a world with some kind of rules some type of controls so that things would be right.

In verse 4 it says for the one in authority is God's servant for your good. The one in authority is God's servant for your good. God raises up rulers rulers for his purpose to make things better.

How many of you drove on a road to come to church? I think there's only one or two or maybe three of us in this room and there actually are more in this service than any other service we've had who actually walked to church.

We did have a few. You didn't need that road out there. But if you drove on that road then you should be part of paying for it. You follow?

That's what taxes are for. Taxes provide us with the services we need. Can you imagine a world where nobody picked up our garbage? Hello? That would be a disaster.

[ 33 : 39 ] So that's why the Bible actually says we should pay our taxes. I know now I'm going to meddling aren't I? We should pay our taxes because they help to provide for the world around us that benefits us all.

They provide for our protection. They provide for our order. They provide our schools. They provide the roads. They provide the things that we need. And so we work together in what we call a government so we can have a good world.

If you owe taxes pay the taxes. My father always used to say to me if you owe more taxes that means you made more money so that's good. I don't know. You might agree. You might not agree.

But we need to do what needs to be done. If you owe a bill pay a bill. We don't want to be known as deadbeat Christians. We don't want our savior to be known as the people that won't pull their own weight.

Right? Do what you're supposed to do so God looks good. And then in verse 8 it actually says this and I think this is really something we need to take to heart.

[ 34 : 49 ] If you owe respect then give respect. If you owe honor then give honor. Kind of lost some of that respect thing lately haven't we?

That whole idea of respect in our culture has shifted. Our teacher doesn't know anything. Our doctor's a fool. And those people in government don't even get me started. Right?

We've lost respect. When I grew up people were Mr. and Mrs. Doctor or Reverend and such. Now we're just whoever. Hey you. Years ago I started having people refer to me as Pastor Tom.

Now I did that not because I care what you call me but because I had little tiny children calling me Tom. And somehow it didn't seem right for a five year old to call me Tom.

So I went with Pastor Tom. I actually went to school one time and read over at Star Point and I walked in the classroom they were probably second grade or something and the teacher asked does anybody know who this is?

[ 35 : 53 ] And several of the kids feeling very good said it's Pastor Tom. And she said very good. Does anybody know his last name? And they said Tom? Didn't we tell you this? Didn't we just say this?

Hello? Hello? It's not because I need respect but it's because certain things in our lives if we hold them in respect we will start to be people that respect each other.

This idea of making everybody common makes everybody less. And that's what we're doing. We're becoming a culture where we treat everybody with disrespect.

And that's not good. Instead treat people with respect. Treat people with honor. Do the things you're supposed to do even with people in authority in your world.

The problem is that sometimes God establishes a government we don't like. Have you ever noticed that? Sometimes God establishes a government we don't like.

[ 37 : 03 ] Now you would think that would just be today but it's not. Back in the time of Israel they had an empire in their area. It was the Babylonian Empire.

Does that sound good? The evil Babylonian Empire. All the people of Israel hated the evil Babylonian Empire and it was ruled by the evil emperor Nebuchadnezzar.

And this is what God said about it. I will give all your countries into the hands of my servant Nebuchadnezzar. My servant king of Babylon I will make even the wild animals subject to him.

And the people of Israel are like what? That doesn't make any sense. That's the evil empire. We can't have such a thing. Those are the bad guys.

But sometimes you see we confuse our patriotism with God's plan. I'll give you one you may or may not like.

[ 38 : 13 ] Probably won't. Do you know what? Anybody here know who Vladimir Putin is? Have you ever heard that name? Do you know what his title is in Russia? The defender of the faith.

The defender of the faith. Did you know he wears a cross around his neck? Did you know he goes to church every week? Did you know he supports the idea of Russia being a Christian nation?

That can't be right. He's the leader of the evil empire, right? The bad guys. He's like a Babylonian. But that's not what the Russians think.

You see, sometimes God raises up a leader who he has a purpose for that we don't understand. Maybe God is trying to show a nation something or maybe God thinks, believe it or not, that other nations have value and that their leaders need his support.

Sometimes God even establishes a leader that goes astray. Remember King Saul? Back to him. People like King Saul.

[ 39 : 33 ] He's a big guy. Everybody likes a big guy for a leader, right? He's got him along with him. God don't have to worry about anything. We've got a big guy with us. Right? They like King Saul. People like King Saul.

Problem was King Saul started to think it was about him and not about God. God got kind of upset with Saul. He decided that he was going to anoint another person to be king.

You know who it was? This kid named David. Okay? Now really, he was a young man. He was a handsome young man.

Let me tell you, all the ladies in the Bible like David. It said that he was, it made a point several times of saying he's good looking. Remember, guys wrote those books.

And he was, he was a hero to the men too. Because he could fight in war. He slew a giant. A guy bigger than King Saul. Impressive.



[ 40 : 34 ] And you want to know what else? He could sing. He played the guitar. Well, he wasn't a guitar. They called it a liar. But basically, their idea of a guitar back then, right? We've got several of his songs, a number of them, in the Bible, actually.

You know? I got a hunk, a hunk, a bun, a bun. Well, that's a different king. But you get the idea, right? Everybody loved David. He was cool. He was great.

So God actually anointed David to be king. But he didn't take Saul out. He left Saul as king. So you've got David, who's anointed to be king.

And Saul, who by the way, happened to be his father-in-law. Just think about that weirdness, right? Who is king? And for one reason or another, God leaves this in-between time.

I've been wondering about that. Why didn't God just take Saul right out? Except that maybe, maybe God was looking for Saul, just like you and I, to have an opportunity to change.

[ 41 : 40 ] To repent. To turn their heart around. Because, you know, leaders are people too. We like to think of them as distant characters and that they're not really folk, but they're really people.

And sometimes God wants to deal with them like he deals with people. You know, there was a time when David was out in the fields roaming around.

He had sort of like, it was kind of like Robin Hood. He had these guys who went with him, about like 400, right? And King Saul was on a trip. But it was a long trip. And there were no port-a-potties.

So he found a cave. You know what I mean, right? And he went into this cave in the dark. But what he didn't know was that David was in the cave with him. And David went up to him.

And he took a knife and he cut off a piece of King Saul's robe. Saul didn't know it. Saul goes out of the cave and he's heading back to his troops and David comes out and goes, hey yo, daddy-in-law.

[ 42 : 42 ] You recognize this? And Saul's like, whoop. Right? Now I was so close to you that I could cut off your robe. Don't think of what else I could have cut.

Why have you been treating me this way? I treat you with respect like you're the king. Why do you treat me this way? See, respect goes around and around and around. Saul actually said, you're right, I'm wrong.

I have to change. Unfortunately, it was a short-lived repentance. Sometimes God gives leaders an opportunity to repent as well.

Sometimes. supporting a government can be one that we don't like. Have you ever noticed that?

Sometimes God seems to allow people to become leaders that we don't particularly want. Have you ever seen that? Now here's a fascinating thing.

[ 43 : 44 ] You know what they do whenever somebody, you know, one of the other people, you know, the ones I mean, those people on the other side, when they get one of their leaders? It's fascinating that folks start calling them Hitler.

Have you ever noticed this? They all call him Hitler. Don't misunderstand. They do it on both sides. Whoever gets in power, they call him Hitler. Even though most of them have nothing to do with Hitler, most people don't even know a lot about Hitler because they haven't studied much of history.

They just know the idea of Hitler. They don't know Hitler. Most of these people are nothing like him. But that's what they call him. Because we've decided that what really is important is not that our country wins, but that our side wins.

Do you follow the trouble here? And so we decide that we're not going to like our government. In verse 2, it says to us, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted.

And those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. Wow. That's harsh. I need you to understand that rebellion is not the same as disagreeing. Rebellion is not the same as having a different opinion.

[ 44 : 59 ] Rebellion is not the same as voting for someone else. Rebellion is not the same as voicing your opinion. Rebellion is destructive. Rebellion means that the people in leadership are so bad that we are going to intentionally not only disobey them, we are going to physically get them out.

And if you study much of history, you'll find that most rebellions lead to very, very, very awful things. Let me read about it. The Russians had a rebellion.

Millions died. The French had a rebellion to get rid of the bad kings and ended up with people that were killing people all over the place. And the people begged for an emperor back. Rebellions often lead to more destruction because remember what God wants.

God wants an orderly government and rebellion leads to chaos and destruction and craziness. So in general, that's not what God wants.

But at times, there are times when Christians need to disobey a government. There are times when that's necessary.

[ 46 : 12 ] the midwives in Egypt that were ordered to throw all the babies into the Nile didn't do what the king told them. When Peter was standing before the Sanhedrin, which were the actually established religious leaders of the nation, and they told him, don't you talk about this Jesus anymore, he said to them, we must obey God rather than people.

There are times when we need to look and decide whether or not our leaders are so far off the mark that we need to do something about it.

In verse 3, we have a real good verse that we have to look at closer. It says, the rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong.

Do you want to be free from the fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. Or, in other words, the role of the leader is to do what God says is good.

How do we know what good is? Well, give an idea. We can read his book, we can study together, we've got Bible studies starting up all over the church this week. You can go and learn about God, you can study God, you can pray to God.

[ 47 : 30 ] We need to learn what's good, what God wants, what God would expect. And by the way, that doesn't mean we'll always agree because Christians don't always agree. I don't know if you're aware of that but they don't. They don't.

You all don't agree, I know that. Our Bible studies don't agree. We have all kinds of arguments in them. It's fascinating to watch. But there is a good, there is a right, there is a proper thing and if our leaders have gone beyond that mark, then maybe they shouldn't be our leaders anymore.

And maybe we need to work to change that. But the problem is, is most people don't think about their leaders in terms of what God thinks are good, they think about their leaders in terms of what they think will be good for me.

People didn't want to get rid of King Saul. He was popular. They didn't want this little runt David running the country, he doesn't know anything. They wanted big, tough Saul. He was popular.

Do you know that in the last election in Russia, Vladimir received 85% approval of the people? They love him in Russia.

[ 48 : 45 ] They really do. He's made their lives prosperous and better and brought back their church. Who's to complain about this? He's actually confronted that mean, bully, country.

You know, the one they call themselves the United States. That's what they think in Russia. You know who else had 85% approval when he took a vote in his country?

About Adolf Hitler. Adolf Hitler, 85% of the German population thought he was a good guy. They didn't know about the crazy stuff.

Most of that hadn't even started happening yet. What they knew about him was that he made sure that every German was always fed, that people needing a job would get a job, that there would be some dignantly restored to the nation of Germany, that it felt like the world had crushed them.

you see the problem is so often when we look at leaders we're not really looking at what would God want, we're looking at what do we want. It makes it hard.

[ 49 : 55 ] It makes it difficult. It's a struggle when we look at governments. I am an American.

American. I was raised as an American. I believe in American exceptionalism. I don't know that that's even very good anymore but I believe in it.

I believe that this is the best country in the world and that if the rest of the world would get more like us they'd be better off. I believe that. And I have those same feelings you do about our country.

Years ago when my wife was conducting a funeral service at military base she asked me to sing a song. Okay? In front of 200 soldiers in uniform she asked me to get up and sing a song at a funeral and this was the song.

If tomorrow all the things were gone I'd work for all my life and I had to start again with just my children and my wife.

[ 51 : 10 ] I thank my lucky stars to be living here today because the flag still stands for freedom and they can't take that away.

And I'm proud to be an American where at least I know I'm free. and I won't forget the men who died who gave that right to me and I gladly stand up next to you and admit her still today because there ain't no doubt I love this land.

God bless the USA. you can't tell me when you hear that song you don't feel something.

You know? I've had the honor of being a part of military funerals. I'm pretty good at funerals. I've got an ability God's given me to keep my emotions under control for the most part which is necessary because you know if the pastor starts losing it the whole place breaks down right?

You know? But I've got to tell you the truth when that sergeant gives the order and the whole place it hits me right now. I love this country.

[ 52 : 37 ] I think this is the greatest country that's ever existed on the face of the earth. I think God loves this country. There's more Christians in this country than anywhere in the whole world.

I'm proud of America. America. But when I was a young boy a young man I should say I didn't give my life to the idea of America.

I gave it to the person of Jesus Christ. We have once a year where the Boy Scouts come to our service. It's kind of they love flags. Boy Scouts love flags.

And they want to bring in the flags. So they bring in these we've got these two flags. American flag and the church flag. I don't know if you know anything about the rules about flags but in the rules of carrying a flag they say that the American flag always has to be above whatever other flag is being presented.

So if the flag of New York is being presented or even another country then you gotta the American flag higher. But I tell the boys when you come through those doors you're stepping out of America.

[ 53 : 46 ] And it's okay that you're bringing in that flag because we are Americans. But you're stepping in to the kingdom of God. And we're not going to put God underneath the United States. Because our citizenship is only temporarily here.

It says in Philippians our citizenship is in heaven. We eagerly await a savior from there. Our king King Jesus. That's who our Lord is.

We want to be Americans. But first we're Christians. So it's not that we're Americans with a little Christian flavoring. We're Christians with a little American flavoring.

Do you follow the difference? Because the number one authority has to remain God.

The Bible says seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all the rest of this stuff will take care of itself. So verse five tells us that it's necessary to submit authorities not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of our conscience.

[ 54 : 59 ] Our conscience that's the part of us that guides us. If our conscience is guided by God, if our understanding of life is guided by God, God will guide us to what we need to do, where we need to be, what we need to support what we should do.

But we need to remember that all the kings of the earth are subject to God. He's the real king. Our citizenship is not of this world.

That's just a short transition. Our citizenship is in the kingdom that will last forever. Our king is King Jesus. And that's who we are.

That's what we are in the midst of this world, of all its confusion. Never be confused with who our king is. Our king is the biggest of guys.

King Jesus. Jesus, King of my heart, Father, my name is in my mind, spirit, the joy of my soul, you are.

[ 56 : 20 ] Jesus, you are. Jesus, to you, the profanity, Father, I'm rest in your pen, spirit, the hope of my heart, you are.

we see coming in and please please give me a Johnson, I worship you, Lord, this is our song of love.

Jesus, taar, diem of■■■■, the Jesus, you saved my soul. I'll thank you forevermore.

Jesus, the love of my life, you are. The heavens declare your God, and the mountains rejoice.

The oceans cry, hallelujah, as we worship you, Lord. This is our song of love.

[ 57 : 54 ] Jesus, I am in awe of the love that you have shown. Jesus, how precious you are to me.

To me. The heavens declare your God, and the mountains rejoice.

The ocean cry, hallelujah, as we worship you, Lord. This is our song of love.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we say, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.

So it's an acknowledgment that God is the king. God is the one that reigns over us and in us. And we're asking for God's will to be done within us.

[ 59 : 02 ] And often, when we do sin, we're going against God's authority. And we're going against what he would call us to do in disobedience.

But I praise God that he says, come to me, and I will offer forgiveness and grace. And so, as we prepare for a table of grace, I ask you to pray a prayer of confession along with me.

Won't you pray? Lord, I have sinned. Lord, I have sinned. I have not always obeyed you. I have not always obeyed you. I repent. I repent. Set me on the right path.

Set me on the right path. Give me your power. Give me your power. To walk your way. To walk your way. Forgive my sins. Forgive my sins. And lead me in your ways.

And lead me in your ways. With righteousness. With righteousness. Holiness. With holiness. And honor. And honor. And glory. And glory. To you. To you.

[ 59 : 58 ] My Savior. My Savior. And my King. And my King. In Jesus' name I pray. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen. Hear the good news.

Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. And this proves God's love for you and for me. So in the name of Jesus Christ, Your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, Your sins are forgiven.

Glory to God. Amen. You lived, you died You said in three days you would rise You did, you're alive You ruled, you ruled, you ruled You said you're coming back again I know you will All the earth will sing your praises All the earth will sing your praises You told, you paid your sins away, oh God

You lived, you made your life away for us You paid now, you saved us through the cross Our hearts are changed because of your great love You lived, you died You said in three days you would rise You did, you're alive You ruled, you ruled, you ruled You said you're coming back again I know you will All the earth will sing your praises All the earth will sing your praises No one, no name could rise above you, Lord

One more, one mind will shine forevermore Your kingdom in heaven and honor Your children stand in the sing of your great word You lived, you died You said in three days you would rise You did, you're alive You ruled, you ruled, you ruled You ruled, you ruled, you ruled You said you're coming back again I know you will All the earth will sing your praises All the earth will sing your praises I know you will sing your praises

[ 63 : 42 ] I know you will sing your praises I know you will sing your praises And now as confident children of God Let's greet one another with the peace of the Holy Spirit Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Peace Whats about Until after communion Last one Last one Once Been a while since I've poded those Whats that?

Been a little while since i've poded those Yeah dismiss You you you Cause always drauf gods Whatever you do Him will bride as your father For what would son worse and never holding each other I saw us and saw you There is, Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature, O Thou art God and the Son.

Thee will I cherish, Thee will I honor, Of Thy soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Beautiful Savior, Born of all the nations, Son of God and Son of Man.

Glory and honor, Praise and adoration, Now and forever, All be Thine.

[ 66 : 14 ] God is King, Sovereign over us all. And yet God also was willing to offer Himself to everyone.

And so you are all welcome here at the table of grace. Whether this is your first time here or you've been here all along, We celebrate that God offers grace to us.

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks to the grace. It is right and a good and joyful thing, Always and everywhere, To give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, Your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, Made covenant to be our sovereign God, And spoke to us through your prophets. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, We praise your name and join their unending hymn.

[ 67 : 27 ] Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ. Your Spirit anointed him To preach good news to the poor, To proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed, And to announce that the time had come When you would save your people.

He healed the sick, Fed the hungry, And ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, You gave birth to your church, Delivered us from slavery to sin and death, And made with us a new covenant, By water and the Spirit.

At his ascension, you exalted him, To sit and reign with you at your right hand. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, He took bread.

He gave thanks to you. He broke the bread. Gave it to his disciples and said, Take and eat.

[ 68 : 48 ] This is my body, Given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, He took the cup. He gave thanks, And said, This is the blood of the new covenant, Poured out for you, Poured out for many, For the forgiveness of sins.

Drink of this, Often, Remembering me. And so, In remembrance of these, Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, We offer ourselves, In praise and thanksgiving, As a holy and living sacrifice, In union with Christ's offering for us, As we proclaim the mystery of faith, Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again, Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, And on these gifts of bread and wine, Make them be for us, The body and blood of Christ, That we may be for the world, The body of Christ, Redeemed by his blood, By your spirit, Make us one with Christ, One with each other, And one in ministry to all the world, Until Christ comes in final victory, And we feast at his heavenly banquet, Through your son Jesus Christ,

With the Holy Spirit in your holy church, All honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, Now and forever, Amen. And now let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us, Saying, Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven, Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us, And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom, And the power, And the glory, Forever and ever, Amen.

Will those who are serving please come forward. Eternal life in the heart.

Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace.

[ 71 : 28 ] Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Let's go.

I'd like to invite you, if you're able to stand, as we're going to sing together, how great is our God.

The splendor of the King, clothed in majesty, let all the earth rejoice, all the earth rejoice.

He wraps himself in light, and darkness tries to hide, and trembles at His voice, and trembles at His voice.

How great is our God, sing with me, how great is our God.

[ 73 : 23 ] And all will see how great, how great is our God.

Page to page, He said, and darkness in His hands.

Beginning and the end, beginning and the end. The God that we did want Promised here in the Son The Lion and the Lamb The Lion and the Lamb How great is our God Sing with me how great is our God And all who sing how great How great is our God He above all names You are worthy of all praise

And my heart will sing how great You are God He above all names You are worthy of all  
You are worthy of all You are worthy of all How great is our God How great is our God  
How great How great How great How great Is our God I know you're going to find this hard  
to believe But when I was going through the process of being evaluated As to whether I  
should be ordained They actually wrote on my evaluation He has a problem with authority  
I said I don't know why

Because I have no trouble being in authority I'm perfectly comfortable with that I don't  
think that's what they meant But then the bishop at one point Laid his hand on me and  
said Take thou authority Meaning that I had authority to lead a congregation of people  
And I've been blessed to lead this incredible congregation of people This amazing ministry  
But I have to tell you That if I had something I would like lifted from me It's a responsibility  
of leading this ministry It's worrying about every one of you And your concerns And your  
welfare And how good you're doing Of mourning when you mourn And going through the  
problems And the struggles And wondering whether we're doing what we should And all of  
that All that comes with that authority And then I think Could you imagine doing that for an  
entire nation?

[ 76 : 45 ] For just a moment Could you imagine being the one who has to make the decision As to  
whether people actually go off to their death? As to whether entire segments of the  
population Will be well or not?

Could you imagine knowing that your very words Will make the decision for thousands of  
people? Whoever are our leaders, pray for them If they do well, we do well Pray for them  
It's not about whether our side wins Because we're all on the same side Pray for them  
Pray that God will guide them Pray that God will direct them Pray that they will be good  
Pray that they will have the wisdom and understanding of the Holy Spirit poured into them  
Because then God will bless all of us God will bless America And we will be citizens Well  
here And for all eternity May God go with you this day and always Amen Thank you Thank  
you Thank you Thank you Thank you

Thank you Thank you Thank you

Thank you Thank you Thank you

And thank you Continue states Be ■■■■ To You You You You Suit the You movie