

# San Juan church of Christ

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## What Does God's Word Say About... Ordained Government

Since the first of the year there have been over thirty police officers murdered in this country while performing their duties. Because of the great concern for this tragedy the church feels that it must address "law and order" once again. The apostle Peter wrote, "Submit [to yield or comply] yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right" (1 Peter 2:13-14).

The apostle Paul defined why God gave government its power over the people. God knew that not everyone would be obedient to His words, therefore He established government to punish those who would lead an unruly life. Paul wrote, "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it [ordained government] is a minister of God for good. But if you do what is evil be afraid; for it does not bear the sword [instrument of death] for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake" (Romans 13:1-5).

These scriptures, written by the apostles, are very clear that if you have good behavior you will not need "to fear" the police or authorities. People who lead a "quiet" life will never come to the attention of the governing authorities. Paul wrote, "make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need" (1 Thess. 4:11-12). When we see people being shot by police, the immediate question brought to mind should be: "What were those individuals doing in the first place that brought a police response to their location?"

Many of the people who bring attention to themselves have too much idle time, which eventually leads to trouble. We should have great respect for the police, and their bravery, because they are "ministers" of God to those who do evil. If parents [father and mother] were to teach this scriptural principle in God's word to their children they would respect those who are in authority and they would have praise from the governing officials.

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:  
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