

The Fourth in our series on God, Christians and Politics. We look at Romans 13.

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[0 : 00] A few weeks ago, we began a brief series on God, Christians, and politics. And today, we're going to be looking at the fourth session in that particular series.

It will wrap up next Sunday, and that will be the fifth and final. So for today, I would like for you to turn, please, to Romans chapter 13, which probably more than any other single passage of Scripture, deals with the Christian responsibility to the civil government.

The point has been made that believers are in the world but not of the world, and yet we have to function and we have to deal with a worldly element.

We have a civil government that is responsible for maintaining an orderly society, and we need to know what exactly is our attitude and position supposed to be to the civil government.

You have heard me say off and on over the past 35 plus years here at Grace that a believer in Jesus Christ ought to be the greatest single asset that the civil government has.

[1 : 21] The believer ought to be an exemplary model citizen. The believer in Jesus Christ ought to hasten to obey the powers that be.

And yet, there are clear-cut instances where to obey the powers that be, the civil government, is to disobey God.

And that, of course, immediately creates a conflict. We know that in the famous Nuremberg trials that followed shortly after World War II were concluded, where top-flight Nazi war criminals were brought to trial, the most common defense that all of them offered was simply this.

I was merely carrying out orders. I was simply doing what my superiors required of me. And in many cases, that involved the execution or the extermination or the gassing of sometimes tens of thousands of people.

Their defense was, it wasn't my fault. I was just doing what I was told. But as was the case there at Nuremberg, that was a defense that was not deemed adequate.

[2 : 40] No one was able to escape justice because they offered as their defense that they were just carrying out orders. And really, when it comes right down to it, there is an undeniable admission that was set forth by the judges and the prosecutors in the Nuremberg trials.

And that judgment was this. There has to be a higher power. Because even though we accept what you say, that you were simply following orders, we are persuaded there is an order giver beyond and above that of those who were issuing orders to you.

You were responsible to that higher power. Now, I do not know that they came right out and said that, although it's been years and years since I've read any of the transcripts about that.

But I would not be surprised. Because really, that is the rationale for the prosecution. Finding them guilty and then sentencing them, some of them, to death by hanging.

They had to acknowledge, if they did not say it publicly, they had to acknowledge, at least to themselves, that, yes, you were carrying out orders from the powers that gave them to you, but there is another power above theirs.

[4 : 10] You should have been responsive to that. And you were not. So, Romans chapter 13. Let us read it, if we may, please. First seven verses. And then we'll be in a couple of other portions as well.

And then we, time permitting, we'll get back to the Old Testament. Romans chapter 13. Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities.

For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. And I must stop here and insert something.

I do not believe that God directly, deliberately establishes certain individuals in a political office.

I believe that he may do so directly, but more often than not, he does so, I think, by a permissive will, rather than by a directive will.

[5 : 12] I do not believe, for instance, and I could be wrong about this. I've been wrong about a lot of things. I do not believe that God was behind the scenes orchestrating events that led to Adolf Hitler being brought to power.

Or, Lenin, or Joseph Stalin. I am not at all persuaded that God deliberately set those individuals in a position of authority.

But I absolutely have to believe that he permitted them to come to power. Because had he not wished to do so, he could have easily prevented them from coming to power.

God is very creative, and he could have done it through any one of a thousand ways. But in his wisdom, he chose to permit them to come to positions of power.

I think that is the meaning of there are no powers that exist. There are no civil authorities that exist except those that are ordained of God.

[6 : 21] And that ordination may either be directive, or it may be permissive. In either case, God ultimately, ultimately is behind that.

Because what he did not do directly, he permitted. Unless you want to have a weak and impotent God who is up in heaven saying, Well, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, whatnot.

It looks like they are going to be installed in a position of power. I wish that were not the case, but there is nothing I can do about it. And that is a God who is impotent and not sovereign at all.

So, I am convinced the more I study the scriptures and the longer I live, that the absolute sovereignty of God is without question.

And yet, God does not make us nor treat us as robots or automatons, where everybody just has to do what they are pre-programmed to do.

[7 : 21] You are predestined to do that. That's nonsense. God is so powerful and so wise that he is able to give man the freedom of the human will.

He does not invade nor overpower our volition. And yet, he is able to, with our volition, work all things after the counsel of his own will.

In my estimation, that requires a much bigger, much wiser God. And that's what he is. So, in this passage in Romans 13, continuing with verse 2, Therefore, he who 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. In other words, it isn't likely that you are going to get into trouble with government authorities for doing good, but for doing evil.

Although, that can happen. We'll see that shortly in the book of Acts. Do you want to have no fear of authority?

[8 : 48] Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. In other words, if you want to be able to walk down the street in safety and guilt-free, without always looking over your shoulder, wondering if some police officer is eyeing you, or has seen your picture in a wanted poster someplace, then don't engage in the kind of activities that would put your picture on a wanted poster.

And you won't have to be looking over your shoulder and wondering if they have spotted you. If you want to be able to move about freely in a society, then don't do anything that would bring suspicion upon you.

Do what is good. You will have praise from the same. For, it is a minister of God to you for good. But, if you do what is evil, be afraid.

You have reason to fear. For, it does not bear the sword for nothing. We do not have police officers going around today brandishing swords.

But, they do carry firearms. Which is nothing more than a reference to an updated sword, if you will. A much more efficient and a much more deadly weapon.

[10 : 09] But, it is simply saying that the police officer, who is armed with a deadly weapon, is not carrying that for nothing. He is carrying it because there are individuals out there in society who pose a definite threat to life and property.

And, out of self-defense, and out of an ability to protect the innocent, he has to be armed with a deadly weapon. And, he isn't carrying it for nothing.

It is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil. Wherefore, it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake.

For, because of this, you also pay taxes. For, rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

Render to all what is due them. Tax to whom tax is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

[11 : 28] Now, would you come over please to 1 Timothy, chapter 2, 1 Timothy, chapter 2, and verse 1.

The apostle says, First of all then, I urge that in treaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men.

For kings. Well, once again, we do not have kings, but we do have elected officials who serve in a presiding role over the affairs of government.

The one who presides over the affairs of the United States government is called the president. Only we put the emphasis on a different syllable and we call him the president.

But that's precisely what he is. He is the presiding individual over the affairs of government. He would be the equivalent of our king, if you will. And we are to offer our prayers.

[12 : 39] Now, that also means even if you didn't vote for him. Which may be a bitter pill for some to swallow.

Nonetheless, we are admonished to remember these individuals in prayer. and I want you to note why we are to do that. Actually, there is somewhat of a selfish motive involved for kings and all who are in authority.

I take it that would include cabinet, that would include governors, that would include mayors, that would include council members of our local governments. For all who are in authority in order that, this is a purpose clause in the Greek, and it means to the end that, or so that a certain thing might be achieved or realized.

And what that is, is that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

This has reference to keeping the lid on society. This means that we are to engage in prayers for those who are in positions of authority and I'll tell you one of the things that I think is involved here is this.

[14 : 00] Prayer for situations for individuals has a way of doing something in the heart and mind of the one who is praying.

What does it do? I'll tell you what it does. It alters attitudes. attitudes. It is very, very difficult to engender hatred toward someone for whom you were praying because it just doesn't mix, does it?

Prayer is often thought of as a tool or vehicle that God has blessed the body of Christ with so that when we invoke these prayers things get done.

God responds. God answers our prayers. God does what we pray and ask him to do. Well, sometimes he does and sometimes he doesn't because God filters our prayers and he answers in accordance with his own good will and purpose and sometimes that coincides with ours.

Sometimes it doesn't. So, prayer is not just a vehicle to get things done or to get your way or to receive this or receive that.

[15 : 33] I've often referred to the average Christian's prayers as just a bunch of give me prayers. Give me this, give me that, and give me something else and it all has to do with what we think ought to happen or what we want and what we think God ought to do and God should be reasonable and do it our way and no later than the day after tomorrow and this kind of thing.

But God isn't interested in it. You know, prayer is an incredible vehicle for altering the inner attitude of the heart of the individual who is offering those prayers.

And that's one of the things that's involved here because once we understand that our country's leaders not only serve at our pleasure and we are the ones who put them in office by virtue of the ballot box, but they are dependent upon the reasonable cooperation of the public for the administering of the office that they're trying to carry out.

And sometimes it gets very, very testy as to whether or not we're going to provide that kind of cooperation, especially when we think it is wrong headed or wrongly directed.

Case in point, Revolutionary War. This was a time of enormous soul searching, inner conflict, conflict, among the patriots in the 13 colonies.

[17 : 12] And most of us have little or no appreciation for what was really taking place, but it was just heart-rending because people were torn between the loyalty to the crown, which they had always given up to this time.

And yet, how were they going to deal with the injustices and the unreasonable demands of the crown? Were they to just roll over and play dead?

And of course, the crown, King George III of England, appealed to what he considered to be the biblical mandate that was commonly called the divine right of kings.

And the divine right of kings meant that the king had a divine right. He was the king and his authority was under the king of kings, and he was delegated that position, and whatever he said, you were supposed to obey, because to disobey the king was tantamount to disobeying the king of kings.

So, where do your loyalties lie? And many people do not realize that in this time of turmoil, and I'm talking primarily about 1772 to about 1778 or 79, the colonists were tremendously divided.

[19 : 00] there were about one third of the colonists who wanted to remain loyal to the king, and about one third of the colonists who wanted to declare independence from the king and from Britain and form a separate nation.

And there were about one third who held back and said, I'm going to see which way this thing goes, and then I'll jump in. So, you must realize that this nation was birthed in independence from Great Britain in a position that was held by only about 30 to 35% of the Americans.

Americans. And those 30 and 35% made things very uncomfortable for the Tories.

The Tories were those who wanted to remain loyal to the king of England. And sometimes the patriots engaged in persecution of the Tories.

sometimes they burned their homes, they burned their businesses simply for advocating that they stay loyal to the crown.

[20 : 25] And some of them packed up everything and moved to Canada. I mean, thousands of them did to escape the persecution from the American patriots who were not in sympathy with remaining loyal to the crown.

They moved to England or moved to Canada and some of them moved to England. Some of them went back home and went back to Europe. So convinced were they that the American patriots were really nothing but a bunch of rebels and they wanted no part of it.

Now, this divided families. It divided neighbors. People were on different sides of this issue. It was a very hotly contested thing. It was not easy.

We tend to think that come Fourth of July or every year, we tend to think that all Americans and all of the colonialists were in favor of independence and not that way at all.

Read John Adams and read Thomas Jefferson and you'll quickly come to another conclusion. Great soul searching that went on. So, where do our loyalties lie?

[21 : 39] The text says, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

Governments are instituted among men. Our declaration says, and that the governed or the governors derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Governments are instituted among men and the reason for that is you cannot have a peaceful and an orderly society without some form of government.

You've got to have some chain of command. You've got to have positions of authority. You've got to have delegated authority. You've got to have people who are in a position to make decisions for other people.

Otherwise, you have open anarchy. And that's something that existed in the time of the judges when there was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

[22 : 59] Everyone became an authority to themselves. It was like an old west motif, if you will, where everyone packed a firearm and that was the law of the west.

Well, it was kind of like that in Israel during the time of the judges. So, you have a breakdown in civil government and civil authority. You have no one who is actually responsible or in charge.

It's just chaotic. It is a terrible way to live. Everything is up for grabs. Nothing is predictable. Nothing is definite. Nothing is certain.

It's incredibly stressful living. And frankly, God doesn't want people to have to go through that. That's why he ordained the principle or the concept of government so that somebody would be in charge, so that the masses would be recipients of welfare and benevolence to the extent that those who were in a position of power were willing and able to grant it at least.

And we have no perfect government because all governments are conducted by imperfect people. And that means that you're going to have inequities, you're going to have injustice.

[24 : 18] In fact, I've made the statement at the outset and you will recall, I think when I simply said that mankind is of such a nature and such a disposition that it is impossible for him to govern himself with equity and justice and consistency.

He just can't do it. He isn't made of the moral stuff that would allow him to do that. And granted, there are some places that come closer than others.

And I, for one, I realize that I'm biased. I know, I admit I'm prejudiced. And I am convinced that the United States of America and our government and our constitution, flawed as they are, is still head and shoulders above anything that anybody else has.

And it has served us better than any other form of government has served anyone. With all of its flaws and shortcomings, it's still the best thing going. We have a degree of freedom and liberty in this country that we have become so accustomed to, it is just ho-hum stuff.

And there are vast areas of the rest of the world that don't even know enough about our freedom and liberty to be able to dream about it.

[25 : 48] That's how out of it they are. We are so incredibly blessed, so fortunate, and often we lose sight of that. God has instituted governments so that men can live peaceably and in tranquility.

And that also provides a basis and a society for the proclamation of the gospel.

people. It allows free course for the word to go forth. Now let's look at one of the passages that is key to this issue back in Acts chapter 4.

And we'll see how these men simply had to go swimming upstream and it was a very dangerous thing they were doing.

This is shortly after the day of Pentecost. very early after the resurrection and ascension of our Lord.

[26 : 56] And in Acts chapter 4 the apostles were speaking to the people. The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came upon them.

And I want to emphasize here these are all Jews. There are no non-Jews involved. This is a completely Jewish setting involving Jewish subjects has to do with a Jewish Messiah.

They came upon them being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening.

But many of those who had heard the message believed, and the number of the men And it came about on the next day that the rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem and Annas the high priest was there and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and all who were of high priestly descent.

These are the religious mucky mucks. This is the religious establishment. These are the people who guided and determined the religious fortunes of the nation of Israel and they were thoroughly corrupt.

[28 : 14] I mean this is the same crowd. This is the same crowd that just a year or not even a year just three months earlier Christ denounced as whitewashed sepulchers hypocrites deceivers of the people.

This is the same crowd. And verse seven says when they had placed them in the center that is Peter and the apostles they began to inquire by what power or in what name have you done this?

Now they're not looking for dunamis power they're looking for authority and they're saying who gave you the authority to do what you did here and of course they're talking about the man who was at the temple gate beautiful who had been lame from his mother's womb 38 years and Peter and John says silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I unto thee rise up and walk this guy got up and walked and stands there looking at his feet and stamping his feet and jumping up and down and he's excited and all the people are standing around and really draws a big crowd and Peter preaches the gospel now this religious crowd is calling Peter and the others what authority are you doing this rather than enter into it and say we saw and we heard what happened to this man who hadn't walked for 38 years and we think it's absolutely incredible it's wonderful how did you do that no they're questioning from a nefarious kind of standpoint what power what name have you done this then

Peter filled with the Holy Spirit said to them rulers elders of the people if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man as to how this man has been made well let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene whom you crucified whom God raised from the dead by this name this man stands here before you in good health he is the stone which was rejected by you the builders but which became the very cornerstone and there is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved

they say they began to confer with one another saying what shall we do with these men we are on the hot seat how are we going to handle this what are we going to do the fact what a word fact facts are stubborn things fact like it or not a fact corresponds with reality fact can't deny it fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in

[35 : 37] Jerusalem and we cannot deny it doesn't your heart just bleed for them what they are saying is we would love to deny it but we can't because we would look like such perfect fools if we deny it we would be going against all reality so we can't deny it but we can't acknowledge it either what are we going to do they are on the horns of a dilemma so I'll tell you there's only one thing we can do we've got to stop this thing get in the stacks we've got to put the clamps on this because this thing will get out of control we've got to stop it right now so they call them back in oh well we've reached the season and we forbid you we forbid you to speak anymore in this man's name you've just got to be quiet we'll have no more of this and they try to intimidate them threaten them bully them let us warn them speak no more to any man in this name and when they had summoned them they called them back in all right you can come back in now they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of

Jesus Peter and John answered this is so priceless because this is the same Peter who just a few days ago said I've never laid eyes on the man I don't know him what are you talking about I'm not one of his followers he said that to a little peasant servant girl could there be a bigger wimp than that and now this same Peter is addressing the religious intelligentsia the establishment of religion of Israel can't get any higher than this standing up to them toe to toe Peter says whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to

God you be the judge in other words Peter saying listen if you think that we ought to be obedient to you rather than to God that's something you'll have to decide we know who we have to be obedient to and we cannot we cannot we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard we just cannot hold our peace we know what we know and we saw what we saw and we cannot deny it when they had threatened them further they let them go finding no basis on which they might punish them on account of the people because they were all glorifying

God for what had happened the man was more than 40 years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed and then if you will come over to chapter five just across the page and let's jump in at verse 17 the high priest rose up along with all his associates this is the same crowd as in chapter four along with all of his associates that is the sect of the Sadducees and they were filled with jealousy jealousy what were they jealous about they were jealous about the reception that Peter and John and the apostles were getting with the people they had won them over and the people were behind them they had never been behind the scribes and Pharisees and the Sadducees they had always just tolerated them they had great animosity toward them in most cases and they recognized that these these uneducated

Galilean country bumpkins have succeeded in conning the people hoodwinking the people of course they're jealous they were jealous and they laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail an angel of the lord during the night opened the gates of the prison and taking them out he said go your way stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this life and the officers in verse 22 came didn't find them in the prison found the prison house locked but they were gone and the captain of the guard chief priest heard these words they were greatly perplexed about what would come of this and someone came up to them and said behold the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people and

[41 : 29] I'm sure their response was oh no how did that happen then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence for they were afraid of the people lest they should be stoned when they had brought them they stood them before the council and the high priest questioned them saying we gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name and behold you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us Peter and the apostles answered and said we must obey God rather than man the God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you had put to death by hanging him on the cross he is the one whom God exalted to his right hand as a prince and a savior to grant repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins and we are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit whom

God has given to those who obey him when they heard this they were cut to the quick and were intending to slay them wow this is obedience to a higher power now for time's sake we're not going to go back to Daniel chapter 3 but I want to give you just a brief setting the same example of obeying God rather than obeying man because the conflict sometimes is established where the choice has to be made and what you do is when you have a clear cut directive or mandate from God that takes precedent over everything else you would like to be able to obey man also but sometimes depending on the demands that man makes you just may not be able to do that however even in the midst of this the scriptures admonish the believer to a position of submission to the higher powers even if you must disobey them and that creates in the minds of some what seems to be a contradiction but it isn't in reality how can you disobey like civil disobedience how can you disobey the powers that be and still be submissive to them it may be a fine line to draw but it needs to be drawn and that is this the apostles in the book of

Acts were clearly disobedient to the religious establishment they would not comply with it but they were submissive in that they did not fight them they did not try to escape from them they submitted themselves to their authority even though they disobeyed that authority and we have the same kind of situation existing in the book of Daniel with Shadrach Meshach and Abednego you recall the story about the fiery furnace and about worshipping the image that the king had set up and anyone who doesn't worship the image is going to be put into the fiery furnace this guy meant business he was a pretty tough character and the three Hebrew children of course refused to do that because they knew that to worship the image that had been set up was a clear cut case of disobeying the most high

God and they simply could not do that so they didn't they would not bow to the image and they were summarily brought up on they admitted it they admitted that they served the Lord God of heaven and it would be wrong for them to bow down to an image well then we'll just have to put you in the fiery furnace well these young men were submissive they didn't turn around and run they didn't fight they just told the king well you'll just have to do what you think you have to do and Daniel three friends told the king our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace but if not and that too is very very significant they didn't know whether

God would be pleased to deliver them or not all they knew was God could but whether God would they didn't know they were willing to leave that to the discretion of God and we know what happened the fourth figure appeared in the fire was the angel of Jehovah they were protected from the flames when they brought them out of the fire they didn't even smell of smoke God was pleased to deliver them they were disobedient to the king but they were submissive they didn't put up a fight they didn't say no way you're going to throw me in that furnace I'll die first none of that they were compliant they were submissive and that's the attitude that a believer is supposed to have we do not fight the government we are submissive to the powers it be we may disobey if we are called upon to violate a clearly given standard by the

[47 : 31] God of heaven that takes precedent and we must obey God rather than man and may I just say this in many respects this is where the abortion issue is this is where the believer is coming from this is why believers see the sanctity of life as being so critical and so important who is the giver of life God is we have a mandate from God to protect and preserve life because every precious life is in the image and likeness of God the rights of the individual what about a woman's right to choose listen a woman has a right to choose she has a right to choose whether or not she will have sex she has a right to choose whether or not she will get pregnant she has a right to choose the partner she has her rights but once a baby is conceived another human being is involved and that's what complicates the issue it is the right to life as opposed to the right of convenience or preference and for the believer the right to life must take precedence so it puts you in conflict sometimes with the powers that be and this is a dilemma that

Christians have always struggled with back in the Old Testament in the New Testament and even today it is an ongoing issue because the subject have I not told you many many times over the years subject always comes down to what always authority who do you recognize as authority that's the burning issue so we've got about seven or eight minutes and I suspect that you have some questions or comments that you would like to offer and we want to entertain them so have we got a roving mic question over here I know this is something you would know but when you mentioned early on about how the country was divided into thirds you had mentioned the Tories what's the what is the source of the term

Tory that I don't know all I know is that's what they were called it's the T-O-R-Y I'm sure that it could be researched and we could find you know the origin of the word Tory but a Tory was simply the name that was given to a colonialist living here in the thirteen colonies whose loyalties remained with the crown of England and did not want independence from England but was a supporter of the crown they were called a Tory Tory now the origin of the word how Tory came about I don't know but I suspect it goes back to a political party thanks for asking a question that you thought I knew the answer to but I didn't okay and there are a few other questions like that too someone else I am not going to let you go five minutes early

I don't want to get in a bad habit yes okay yes I believe that the Lord gave me the gift of music which I haven't played in a while that's another story and I met my beautiful wife 22 years ago and she's my soul mate was that meant to be with God or was that just a coincidence in life and it just worked out because you were talking earlier about how you know some things are not planned we have free will and some things are directed by God I wish I could give you a better answer I'm really in much the same kind of a dilemma myself Jock and by the way next time you come bring your saxophone with you I really just can't answer that as well as I would like although indulge me for a moment if you will and let me take you back to that summer in 1956 when I met her majesty

I went downtown with my Jewish buddy to see a movie a matinee movie and as I told you earlier the king and I was playing and we were in the mood to see this old dude who was bald and barefoot dancing around and it turned out to be Yul Brynner turned out to be one of my favorite movies anyway but we went around the corner to a different movie and we saw that and at the same time the same day Barbara went downtown to see the movie and she specifically was going to see the king and I because all of the people at work told her how wonderful it was so she went downtown to see the king and I and she did what I did she saw the poster there and she decided I'm just not in the mood for a musical and she went around the corner to the same theater that my buddy and I had gone to now you can call that a coincidence if you want and I didn't even know about that until quite some time later until years later until years later it was just a comment

[53 : 52] I think it was something about the king and I we'd gotten it on a video or something and I told her you know I said this was playing you know at the theater when we met and I saw she just stood out in her radiant beauty in the midst of that darkened theater and I could see her wow and I said this is the movie that was playing when we met and she said I know I went downtown that day to see that movie and decided at the last minute that I didn't want to see a musical went around the corner to the only other theater in town and that's where we were so coincidence I don't know I like to think not I don't know what God is responsible for orchestrating directly but what he does not orchestrate directly he does indirectly through his permissive will he does not override our volition because if he did if he overrode our volition then there would be no basis for our accountability we would be just doing what we were programmed to do and I do not believe that that's the case some other comments or questions sorry I don't have a better answer for you

John up here Keith Britton has a question comment you spoke of some of the leaders that were really out of place as far as being godly people even for the Jewish nation and others and it would seem and maybe even continues today that god allows leaders as much as for leadership he uses them for judgment that he gives us and he gave them what they deserved and really a reflection of who they were and where they the type of people that they had become and I believe that we see that happening and I think we look through history including the second world war time there were judgments that were placed upon the nations involved and of course it spilled over to others as well that's an excellent point I appreciate you making that god uses people to spank people and he used nebuchadnezzar to discipline his own people and he even told them that that was what he was doing and why he was doing it and he called

Cyrus the Persian my servant and he used foreign enemies to discipline his own people on multiple occasions he did that and sometimes god can use an unbeliever to take a believer to the woodshed it happens we just don't always know the dynamics and sometimes we don't know if god is actually doing that or if that's just the way things turned out sometimes we just don't know but there's no question that god uses people god uses people to bless people and god can even use people to curse people i will bless those that bless you and curse those that curse you god said to abraham and his seed if there is another question we'll take it right here yes this will be our last and we'll have to dismiss this is not a question so much as it is just a comment in relation to that destiny business looking at

Hebrews 1 14 the passage there is talking about angels and it so it just shows God's power that even before we're saved he is working in our lives that's very true and we don't know how or to what degree he uses angelic involvement we know he does but at the same time we don't know the dynamics of that some theorize that all believers have a guardian angel I don't know they said all believers have a guardian angel and when you're speeding down the highway if you exceed the speed limit your guardian angel leaves I don't know I don't know that that's true but maybe it ought to intimidate you just a little bit to drive within the speed limit but you know sometimes guardian angels are no sometimes God's people come to a very terrible end physically they die

Christians get killed in automobile accidents too Christians get killed by a safe falling on their head as they walk down the street on a sunny day too and we're not exempt from those things we just sometimes do not understand the ways of God but you know we do have comfort in this one thing and this you ought to really use it to shore up your soul that Romans 8 28 really really is true God does work all things together for good for those who love him it does not mean that all things are good some things are terrible and painful excruciating but God uses them for our ultimate good what we have a problem is we want God to use them for our immediate good so we can see and understand that God uses them for our ultimate good and sometimes it may even involve your home going and we look at it on this side and we say oh that's terrible but if we were looking at it from their viewpoint on the other side they wouldn't regard it terrible at all they'd regard it as the benevolence of God it's a wonderful thing we serve a wonderful

[60 : 14] God may we stand please loving father how grateful we are to be able to call you our father and we recognize that this is simply because of what your son did for us that gives us the right to boldly come into your presence because you have made us accepted in your beloved son we recognize that this morning once again we've talked about things that we don't even come close to fully understanding but we take great comfort in the fact that you do and you do all things well thank you for these people thank you for your activity and the lives of each and every one of us those things that we know and understand those things that we don't even suspect but you are there and you are working we bless you for being the God that you are Christ's wonderful name Amen