

February 3, 2021

Ordained of God

Living in a democratic society, we are accustomed to electing our public officials. Every year elections are held whereby we, the people, cast votes, thereby determining who will serve as leaders in our civil government. As a result, we tend to perceive or be of the persuasion that we as men are the ones who place people in positions of leadership. While there is an element of truth in terms of the majority vote, there is a greater principle of which we cannot lose sight. Regardless of man's role in determining civil leadership, all civil authority is ultimately chosen by God. For the next several weeks we will be meditating upon **Romans 13:1-5**. As you read this passage, notice carefully the phrase, "of God." It is found five times in these five verses.

Verse 1 clearly states that all powers or civil authorities are ordained of God. In fact, this verse clearly states that there is no power but of God. Even the most wicked and ungodly ruler owes his position to God. Why would God allow wicked men to rule? Let us begin by considering what it means to be ordained of God. The word translated ordained in this verse means to assign, to dispose to a certain position, or to appoint. It carries with it the idea of arranging in an orderly manner. We know that God is sovereign. God in heaven rules over the affairs of men. This includes civil government. Regardless of how it happens, no one comes to a position of leadership apart from the sovereignty of God.

Turn to **Psalms 75:6-7**. Promotion, be it in business or in government, comes from God. Can you think of some Bible characters who were promoted to positions of leadership by God? A full list would be too lengthy to name, but it would include men like Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Saul, David, and Daniel. All the judges, all the kings (including the ungodly kings), all the prophets, and all the disciples were chosen by God and given leadership positions and responsibilities. Even Judas Iscariot who betrayed Christ, was ordained by God to be a disciple.

As you read through your Bible, especially in the chronicles of the kings, pay special attention to the men God placed on the thrones of Israel and Judah. How did they come to power? Were they good kings or bad kings? What happened as a result of their rule? How did God remove them?

Unfortunately, man's sinful nature is often given to pride, especially when placed in a position of authority. Read **Daniel 5:18-20**. What king was Daniel talking about? According to verse 18, who gave him his kingdom? Who is Daniel talking to? Read **verses 22-30** to find out what happened to him.

While the presence of an ungodly ruler can lead to suffering for the people of God, it is not without its purposes. When we find ourselves under leadership that we don't agree with, it is important to remember that God placed them in that position for a purpose. In the coming weeks, we will consider what our attitude and response should be to those in authority over us.