God's Purpose for Government
(A Mid-week Study)

I have thus far chosen to remain mostly silent about the current unrest in America, primarily because I wanted to see where things were headed before I addressed the situation. ***God's word is not silent about the role of government.*** My words here will be biblically based and not political, so... "what saith the scriptures?" - Romans 4:3 (which must be the basis of our beliefs).

It is quite simple, actually. Romans 13:1-7 is exceedingly clear:

> 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. **2** Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. **3** 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; **4** for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. **5** Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. **6** For because of this you also pay taxes, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. **7** 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.

Yes, some people break our laws. And yes, sometimes people in positions of authority break our laws (including elected officials and even law enforcement who have been tasked with protecting and serving the public. When that happens, justice should ***always be served in every case, no exception for law enforcement or elected officials or the public at large!***

Therefore the governmental authorities (Romans 1:1-7) must hand out justice for all, including law breakers who riot under the guise of "protest." No exceptions for anyone of any race, creed or national origin! God commands us to obey the laws of our land (see also I Peter 2:11-17). Unless the authorities *directly* command us to disobey God's laws, we must obey the authorities. If we *are* told to disobey God's laws, then civil disobedience (not violence, merely non-compliance) are in order. (Read Acts 5:17-32).

My brother was shot and killed by a black man when I was in high school (Dallas, 1964). After his funeral, my father said very distinctly, "The only man guilty here is the man who pulled the trigger. You must spend your life judging people as individuals." Dad lived that creed. When he passed away at home, at age 90, his daily care giver was a wonderful, caring black woman. She cooked, cleaned and cared for his home and lawn. As a Christian, dad loved her and her husband, and they loved him.

Every sin, large or small, is an individual choice for which God (and we) understand is an individual infraction. We don't hold family members guilty for what others have done. We don't hold a race or a neighborhood responsible for what an

individual has done. And we must likewise, not hold an organization (police department, city council or state legislature and governor) responsible for something ***one individual did which was against the law.***

   When people riot to try to punish others who broke no law, anarchy will reign and God, Himself, will bring down His own wrath on those who steal what belongs to Him. "Steals?" Yes steals. Romans 12 says, "Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath *of God*, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

   Vengeance belongs to God. When *you* take it, you are stealing from God. If we are to survive as a nation, and have the blessings only God can give, then we must both understand and follow God's laws! Read carefully. Think deeply. Live biblically. Love purely. Forgive profoundly.

          Ray Wallace