

BY BRETT BAGGETT

THE ROLE OF CIVIL GOVERN- MENT

— or —

**The Identity and Duties
of Governing Authorities**

— or —

The Identity and Duties of the Civil Magistrate as Manifestly Taught in the Holy Scriptures, which Flow from Their Identity—Namely as Servants of God—into Their Activity—Namely to Approve of and Protect the Innocent while Being a Terror to and, when Necessary, Punishing the Wicked with Their Drawn Sword—for the Purpose of Bringing Ascribed Glory to God and Good to Man, Woman, and Child, Born and Preborn; Along with a Rebuke to the Saints who Have Bent Their Knees to the Civil Government, Paying Homage to God's Servant as Statists



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INTRODUCTION

STATISM AND THE CHURCH

R.C. Sproul once asked Francis Schaeffer what was his greatest concern for the American church. Sproul says that without hesitation, Schaeffer said, “Statism.” Statism is when the civil government becomes unchallengeable and unquestionable by the people. In their minds, though they may not realize it, the State essentially becomes god. They command; we obey. They decide; we fall in line. Usually, this happens until society gets wild enough that it wakes up even those who have been soothed to sleep by this false god’s lullaby.

Men, women, boys, and girls need to understand that God has instituted several forms of government on his earth. They are often called “spheres of sovereignty” or authority. He has instituted *personal* government, *family* government, *church* government, and *civil* government. In this booklet, we will draw our attention to Civil government and will do so for this reason: Francis Schaeffer’s concern has become a terrible reality. Statism plagues America in general, even the church in particular. Before we are going to see justice established in society, first, where guilt resides, we are going to have to repent of statism in the church.

The passage that I want you to look at is very familiar to many believers, yet most, it seems, only look at what duty we *owe* our governing authorities, rather than looking also at everything the Lord God reveals concerning the *duties* of governing authorities.

For our purposes, I want to look at these few verses, Romans 13:1-4, as an outline to see what we can glean from God himself, speaking through Paul, when it comes to the role of civil government. Yet what is even more helpful is, first, looking at their identity. Understanding the identity of civil magistrates is crucial because identity determines activity and responsibility. Who you are determines what you do and that for which you are accountable.

DOCTRINE

The doctrine I wish to teach you and help you make use of in this booklet is this: Civil magistrates are servants of God who must be *terrors* to evildoers, *approvers* of those who do good, *promoters* of well-being, and *punishers* of the wicked, for the good of men and the glory of God.



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