

Can We Pray For Our Government?

We have recently received emails from a man who says it is wrong to pray for the government and its efforts in the current war on terrorism. His claim is that the governments of men are corrupt and unapproved by God. According to him, the only kingdom for which we can pray is the kingdom of God. Of course, this man is a member of the Watch Tower cult, better known as "Jehovah's Witnesses."

The Bible clearly teaches we are to pray for those in authority. "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Timothy 2:1-2). In so doing, we do not support any corruption in government.

The Bible also teaches that governments are ordained of God, that is, He is the One Who establishes them. Paul wrote, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God" (Romans 13:1). He even warns us not to resist the government, for such is resistance to God as well (Romans 13:2).

Jesus told Pilate that he would have no power "unless it had been given [him] from above" (John 19:11). In other words, God is the One Who put Pilate in his position. Long ago, Daniel revealed this truth. He told Nebuchadnezzar that "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Daniel 4:25).

Some will say, "But, is it right to pray for the government when it is killing men?" Again, Paul addressed this subject. He said the government "does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil" (Romans 13:4).

Not only is it not sinful to pray for our leaders, it is commanded (1 Timothy 2:1-2). We need to pray that they will make wise decisions concerning the war in Afghanistan, as well as a thousand other issues. It is proper to pray for the well being of those in the military and that evil will be hindered. Yes, we can and should pray for our government.

Steven F. Deaton