Respect Of Government

Intro: We went through the period of the turbulent 1960s, where disrespect and disobedience to government was the “in thing” to do. The “establishment” (as they called it) was something to rebel against. We have gone through a period in which the President doing things that are a shame to even speak of was made public and became widely publicized. We have almost an endless supply of jokes making those in office the butt of those jokes. Disrespect for governmental authority reigns in our society. What should the Christian’s response be to governmental authorities.

I. GOD IS STILL THE RULER IN THE AFFAIRS OF MAN TODAY.
A. “God is dead”
   1. First stated by Friedrich Nietzsche. He wrote, “God is dead. God remains dead. And We have killed him....”
   2. “Time” April 8, 1966
      a. On the cover they asked the question: “Is God Dead” dealing with religion in America.
      b. It covered the views of Dr. Thomas J. J. Altizer of Emory University in Atlanta, GA.
   3. This, to a great extent, was taking a deistic view of the world.
B. Our God is still alive and working in the affairs of man today.
   1. Dan. 2:21 “21And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:”
   2. Dan. 4:25, 32 “25That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.... 32And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”

II. GOD IS THE ORDAINER OF ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY.
A. Pro. 8:15 “15By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.”
B. Rom. 13:1 “1Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”
C. We must respect them or show them consideration; Rom. 13:2 “2Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”
D. We must obey them.
   1. Rom. 13:1, 5 “1Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.... 5Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.”
   2. 1 Pet. 2:13 “13Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;”
E. When we do wrong they have the right and obligation to punish.
   1. Rom. 13:3-5 “3-5For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.”
   2. 1 Pet. 2:14 “14Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.”
F. When we reject them we reject the one who ordained them.
1. 1 Pet. 2:13 “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;”
2. Rom. 13:2 “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”

III. DAVID’S ATTITUDE TOWARD SAUL.
A. Respect and obedience
B. 1 Sam. 24:1-7 “And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepeoetes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe privately. And it came to pass afterward, that David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt. And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD’S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.
So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.”
C. 1 Sam. 26:7-11 “So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time. And David said furthermore, At the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD’S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.”
D. 2 Sam. 1:1-16, 14, 16 “Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag. It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance. And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped. And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also. And David said unto the young man that told him, How knowest thou that Saul and Jonathan his son be dead? And David said furthermore, At the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord. Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him. And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword. And David said unto the young man that told him, Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. 14And David said unto him, How was thy soul not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD’S anointed? 15And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD’S anointed.”

Conclusion: We need to be careful as to how we speak about governmental authorities and make sure we always show respect. It is ultimately an idea of authority, and just as we are to obey God we are to obey all those that are in authority; i.e. government, parents, elders, etc.