



CHRISTIANS & CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Romans 13:1-7

June 26, 2022
Pastor Trevor Cooper

We have been in the book of Romans since February of 2021. The time of writing was probably during Paul's 3 months in Greece, described in Acts 20:2-3 between A.D. 55-57. Paul didn't need Rome as some would say to complete His ministry, but Rome needed Paul. His calling and purpose assured in chapter one verse five, that by Christ's grace, he is called to "*bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations.*"

In Romans 12, the Scripture urges Christians to show grace through serving the church with spiritual gifts, through personal genuineness, by caring for family and others, including our enemies. In Romans 13, Paul teaches there is also a responsibility to show grace toward government. We do this by giving appropriate submission to the governing authorities.

Romans 13:1-7

"Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. 2 So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. 3 For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. 4 The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. 5 So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. 6 Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. 7 Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority."

"By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just; 16 by me princes rule, and nobles, all who govern justly" **Proverbs 8:15-16**

"He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding" **Daniel 2:21**

"Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. 29 Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way." **Daniel 3:28-30**

1. Christians should Not REBEL against Authority.

2. Christians should URGE Governments to Fulfill their PROPER Role.

- Civil GOVERNMENT is a means ordained by GOD for ruling and maintaining ORDER in communities.

*Each such means has its own sphere of authority under Christ. Who now rules and sustains creation, and the limits of each sphere are set by reference to the others. In our fallen world these authorities are institutions of God's "common grace", standing as a bulwark against anarchy and the dissolution of ordered society. **R.C. Sproul***

"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. 16 Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. 17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor."

1 Peter 2:13-17

3. Christians should SUBMIT unto the LORD.

*"Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. 16 And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" 18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. 20 And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" 21 They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." 22 When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away." **Matthew 22:15-22***

- When we SUBMIT to human authority for the Lord's sake, we WORSHIP him in our submission.

They have been instated by God. We are to pray for them, obey them (unless contrary to God's Word), and yet watch over civil governments, reminding them that God ordained them to rule, protect, and keep order. Jesus reminded his earthly authorities of this truth,

*"Why don't you talk to me?" Pilate demanded. "Don't you realize that I have the power to release you or crucify you?" **11** Then Jesus said, "You would have no power over me at all unless it were given to you from above. So the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin." **John 19:10-11***