

Romans 13.1-7 Roman Government, Source of Authority, Gov Function, Submission, Church Role, Taxes, Millennial Gov 175-180a

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[Romans 13.1-2 Roman Government and Romans 13 175]

Now we consider how to apply what we have learned thus far in Romans 1-12. And 13.1-7 is the most important passage telling us how to relate to the government. First we will look at the background in detail because of the timelines of it. Rome also had a lot of believers in the 1st Century.



We are in the Application portion of the book, 12.1-15.13. I have described it as the living out of what we learned in the first 11 chapters. If you have received that provision of God's Righteousness, Justification, it will have impact on your total existence, all your relationships and how you relate to every area of life. We looked at how it is in relationship to God which is fundamental because if our relationship to God is disturbed, then all the other relationships will not be what they need to be. And if we are rightly related to God, then we are able to function in the church through the spiritual gifts that God has given, 12.3-21. That will extend to how we relate to the culture or society, chapter 13. And then we will see how to deal with the liberty we have in Christ. We can limit it a the need arises in different relationships.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. Application to Society | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |

I think the first two verses are broader than just 'government'. That is why I have noted it as Submission to Authority, and I think it applies to all areas that we are to be subject to and then specifically to government further in the passage, 3-7.

We will read these first two verses, but not in detail until we spend time looking at this relationship to government in general, setting the framework and foundation to these passages.

13.1 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.

Verse 1: This applies to every soul or all souls as the literal Greek wording is, and I mention that it is at the very beginning which is the emphatic position, emphasizing that there are no exceptions, that this applies to *all* and this is what is expected from God. He will give lots of reasons for what he is going to exhort in the following part.

So every person is to be in subject to the governing authorities because there is no authority except from *God*. Underlying that is the sovereign hand of God where He orchestrates every authority that exists. There is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God; so that raises a lot of questions concerning evil governments, totalitarian systems, etc. and we will discuss all of that.

13.2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

Therefore whoever resists authority—the opposite of submission—has opposed the ordinance of God, or even the *decree* of God, the thing that God has set up in the universe.

And they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. Now does that apply to the believer for whom Paul describes as having 'no condemnation'? I think that refers to 'all persons' mentioned in verse 1; they will receive condemnation upon themselves. We will look at what that means.

So these 2 verses raise lots of issues and I hope we will answer all or at least most of them.

Issues

1. When is revolt OK? When the U.S. government was founded with a revolt, was that acceptable?
2. Is it OK to protest? Not such a drastic revolt, but in some way arguing with the authorities. Is it OK to stand with a sign outside, protesting abortion clinics, for example?
3. Is pacifism OK? This is a big issue in some segments of Christianity.
4. Can you withhold taxes? For example, if you do not support abortion, or a pacifist not wanting to support war, and some justify withholding taxes on the basis of the evilness of some of the policies of some governments.
5. What if government evil? Like Germany when it commanded certain things? Revolt?
6. What if government fails its role? You might ask a questions behind that: What is the role of government? What if government is failing in that role? Does that give you permission to avoid verses 1 and 2? Revolt?
7. What is the place of political activism? Is there a place for political activism? Is it sin to be involved in that area, or is it permissible? Does it not violate the submission encouraged in verse 1?
8. Is there a time to disobey? It is pretty fundamental in verse 1, even dogmatic. It is a command even though it is in the present tense. It includes 'every person' and it doesn't include any exceptions. So are there exceptions? Is there a time to disobey?

Hopefully we will answer most of these and at least give a framework or basis for answering some of them. I don't think Scripture answers them specifically or directly but I think there is some further teaching outside of Romans that we need to look at to help us come to some conclusions concerning any of these questions.

Context of passage

1. Textual Context - Romans 12 and then the entire book.
The text itself, where does it fit in with all the other texts of the book.
Historical context - In what situation does this passage find itself historically, ie, what was going on?
Theological context - It will help if you also understand the theological context of the book of James. Chapter 2 seems to be in contradiction of Romans 1-5 where Paul says justification is by faith and faith alone, apart from works. James 2 says that if you don't have works, your faith is dead and justification is by works. This is in a different theological context. Romans is about

justification as the *initial relationship to God* that is by faith, by faith alone. James talks about *sanctification*, which is a totally different issue; how you live is important when it comes to sanctification, particularly as it relates to other people and as they observe you. So that's a theological context that is different in Romans from the book of James.

So it is not just where the passage falls in a given book.

Roman 13 Context

1. Application - Of the book overall. I like to describe it as what regeneration looks like in society, lived out in the world, in the church. What does it look like in terms of other people? So it is within the context of *application*. So it is related to chapter 12 but also to the passage that follows, chapter 13.
2. Justice - 12.9 *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.* 14 *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse....* 17 *Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.* 18 *If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.* 19 *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.* 20 *"BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD."*

The foundation is the laying of ourselves on the altar, 12.1-2, which is the only way of doing what verses 9, 14, 17 or anything following verse 3, encourages us along with chapter 13. It involves our relationship with the Lord, being in fellowship or walking in the Spirit—that is the only way we can fulfill *anything*.

So, verse 9, let love be without hypocrisy; you can't do that without the relationship of fellowship, and you can't really abhor that which is evil and cling to what is good unless you are in fellowship. Then in verse 14, when opposition comes and we are confronted, we have a conflict or something goes wrong in a relationship: bless those that persecute you, bless and curse not. We stressed that the only way to do this is be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Then that whole portion in verse 17: Never pay back evil for evil to anyone, respect what is right... be at peace, never take your own revenge—vengeance is Mine, says the Lord. Again, the only way to respond rightly is if we have a right relationship.

In chapter 13, in the context of opposition: How does God carry out vengeance or justice? We are not to work out our own justice. One of the main ways that He does that is with the institution that He has

established, the institution of government. Chapter 13 is going to lay out that broad relationship.

3. Major themes

You might consider these 2 passages somewhat of the theological context that contribute to the theology that we are discussing.

Authority from God - Psalm 62.11 *Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God;*

This verse underlies everything that we have in 13.2. Sometimes the word 'power' is translated 'authority'. The exercise of authority or power belongs to God. I think this is what is behind thinking of Paul. Any power that exists comes from God. This is one of the major themes of 13.1-7.

Jeremiah 24.1a *After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim,...*

That is the context of the children of Israel in captivity and under an evil government, Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire who had totally destroyed the Temple, the city of Jerusalem and taken the Jews captive. All of this is God's doing; they are under judgment, under God's sovereign hand, but just as they went into captivity, notice what verse 4 tells us:

4 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 5 "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the captives of Judah,...

Jeremiah had just described a parable of good figs and rotten figs, and that was the composition of the children of Israel. Some of them are rotten, but there are amongst them some good figs that He is going to preserve in a totalitarian system. So now he is addressing the good figs:

...whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans. 6 'For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; and I will build them up and not overthrow them, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. 7 'I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

So God is sovereign over governments. He brought Nebuchadnezzar in the first place to bring discipline and judgment and destroy the nation. And now, in captivity, He is going to preserve that good fruit under a totalitarian system. That is His will, that His people be under that system. And there is a future: He is going to bring them back to the land.

This is OT history, and one of things that Paul is describing when he says that all authority is established by God and He has a purpose—we may not understand it, may not like it, it may be painful, but we are to trust in a sovereign God. That is the major theme of this passage: this authority is from God and He is orchestrating events regardless of what government we find ourselves under.

Submission to Authority The other theme that we will address.

4. Overview

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. Application to Society | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |
| 2. Love of the Citizens | 13.8-10 |
| 3. Motivation for Alert living | 13.11-14 |

I have divided the 'Application to Society' portion into 3 parts: Submission to Authority, Love of the Citizens (we have already talked a lot about love, in chapter 12) and Motivation for Alert living.

Context of passage

1. Textual Context - Romans 13
2. Historical Context - Roman Empire

Having discussed now the Textual Context of Romans 13, we will take a look at the Historical context of the Roman Empire, and this will help us appreciate and understand Romans 13.1-7.

Roman Empire -a

1. Roman Government

I am going to point out similarities between the Roman government and the government in the United States. We will look at what the government was like in the time maybe even before Christ. In that time the government had these characteristics:

Roman Empire -b

1. Divided government - Its divided government was in fact quite a good system; the framers of our constitution saw the advantage of divided government because of the depravity of man. I'm not sure that the Roman mindset had that in mind but they had a Senate with authority such that not all the power resided in one individual.
2. After killing of Julius Caesar (44 BC) - But historically, as time went on, especially after the killing of Julius Caesar in 44 BC, power was more centralized. That is the tendency and it is always a danger because you have more power, fewer hands and therefore the greater potential for the sin nature to do what it does. But with divided government you have, in some cases, checks and balances which kind of restrain evil. Incidentally, I believe that that is one of the reasons God created *nations* at the Tower of Babel—to divide governments in order to be checks upon one another.
3. Degeneration - This took place after that consolidation of power. Augustus was given power for life and there was further degeneration under Caligula and Claudius and eventually under Nero. And somewhere in that time frame, at least by the time of Nero, the emperor had all power to the extent that they demanded worship from the subjects. And Paul is writing in the time of Nero, after this degeneration of the Roman government where all power resided within one individual, the emperor himself even calling upon worship.
4. Persecution of church by Jews - In general the government let the people, especially in the provinces and away from Rome, have considerable freedom. In the book of Acts, and even in the life of Christ, you see that the persecution of the church primarily came from the Jews, not from the Roman Empire.
5. Fair treatment by Rome (Pax Romana)
These people had relatively fair treatment. The Pax Romana was established before the killing of Caesar which was the peace of the Empire around the world. So there was a fair amount of freedom for the Jewish people, to travel—Paul went on many missionary journeys and was facilitated by the Roman roads.
6. Corruption - We see the corruption in the NT, particularly in the area of taxation.

Matthew 9.9 *As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.*

Luke 19.1-10 (2, 8) ...2 *And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was*

rich.... 8 Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much."

The Roman government allowed the tax collectors to extort as much as they could from the people, so they were hated and especially by the Jewish people because they knew their money was going to Rome and they thought of themselves as their own entity, even though they were under the thumb of the Roman Empire.

Zaccheus was rich—and we know how he became rich, with the extortion. And the Roman Empire didn't care as long as they got their share. So the tax collectors were hated. But notice what conversion will do to even the most hated—tax collectors and sinners were put on the same level in the gospels.

Roman Empire - a

1. Roman Government - Jesus never encouraged His disciples to go against the government, in fact the very opposite. Pilate was part of the Roman government, an official in Judea and not in Rome but he would have been somewhat typical of others throughout the empire. Paul was under Nero; in fact he appealed to Caesar, in Acts. This gives a little feel of the context that Paul was writing in as he wrote Romans 13.
2. Roman Treatment of Jews - There are a lot of hints in the NT to give us a pretty good picture of the Roman treatment of Jewish people. And we know also from writers outside the Biblical passages.

Jewish Treatment

1. Tolerant of religion/customs - mostly confined to the Temple
2. Permitted Sabbath worship -
3. No images in temple area - The Jews were strict about what could be brought in the the temple area.
4. Not required to worship Emperor - It was common for the military to march around with images of the Emperor—as demanded by the Emperor—but they kind of bent their rules and did not do it in the temple area for sensitivity to the Jewish prohibition against images and idols. So they didn't push their 'rules' upon them to excess. Overall the Jewish treatment was pretty fair. They were not required to worship the Emperor, for example, whereas that was quite strictly adhered to in other areas in the province itself.
3. Resisting Attitude of Jews - But one of the problems was the Jewish attitude:

Jewish Attitude

1. Nationalism - Deuteronomy 17.14 *“When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,’ 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman.”*

The Jews would ‘camp on’ that last phrase, and would not accept another government, saying: We are in the land and we should rule ourselves. There was a kind of spectrum in this from those who overtly rebelled and resisted, like the Zealots, and they also felt they had certain rights in the Empire

John 8.33 *They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free?’”*

2. Rights - Matthew 22.16 *And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. 17 “Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?”*

They went to trap Jesus—with a no-win question. They think that if He encourages them to pay taxes, He is disloyal to Judaism and is disloyal to the temple, but if he say, No, you don’t have to pay taxes to Rome, He is a rebel against the Roman Empire. So they thought they ‘had’ Him. This rather fundamental and a background to Romans 13:

18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? 19 “Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.” And they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” 21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.”

Paul will develop the concept of what belongs to Caesar. So Jesus obviously was not trapped and answered them to the point that they could not rebuke.

I bring this out for 2 purposes: The Jews balked; that’s why they hated tax collectors. And they thought they had certain rights that would be violated by the Roman Empire.

3. Constant rebellion - Also there are examples/references of rebellions in the book of Acts. There was constant rebellion.

Acts 5.36 *“For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. But he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. 37 “After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up*

in the days of the census and drew away some people after him; he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered. 38 “So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; 39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God.”

These were 2 very specific rebellions, but there were many others. Gamaliel recommended that they leave these rebels alone because if it wasn’t of God it would come to nothing.

4. Zealots - A little of the background that is hinted at in talking about the Zealots, historically we know that they refused to pay taxes and other things; and some of them were actually insurrectionists—one of the famous ones was Barrabas; he was a murderer—and the insurrection was against the Roman Empire. Barrabas was set free instead of Jesus who was crucified.

Luke 6.15 *and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot;*

Simon was a Zealot also. So there was a tax collector and a Zealot that Jesus called to Himself, and, obviously again even the most rebellious of rebels, with the conversion of the Lord Jesus Christ, their hearts are changed.

5. Expelled from Rome - The Jews were eventually expelled from Rome and I think this took place a few years before writing of the book of Romans, by Claudius in the 49-53.

Acts 18.1 *After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome.*

6. AD 70 - The Jews became so obnoxious and the Zealots were so irritating, and others as well, that eventually, in 70 AD the Romans came and just wiped everything out. It is estimated that 1.1 million Jews and others died.

That is something of the background of Romans 13, and we will develop further next time the relationship of the church in the midst of this.

Roman Empire - a

1. Roman Government eg Pilate
2. Roman Treatment of Jews

Jewish Treatment

1. Tolerant of religion/customs
2. Permitted Sabbath worship
3. No images in temple area
4. Not required to worship Emperor

3. Resisting Attitude of Jews
4. Relationship of Church

The book of Acts gives us a little picture of the Roman Empire and its relationship to the church. Remember the church was made up of a large number of Jewish people. Even though converted the old nature would pull them back into attitudes of Zealots and with their tendencies and former tax gatherers as Jews would have hated the Romans. But this chapter is written to everybody, and they should be in subject to the governing authority.

A most important principle is SUBMISSION to AUTHORITY!

[Romans 13.1 Source of ALL Authority 176]

This is an important passage in Romans, and I am going to broaden it because I think the first 2 verses are broader than just government authority and is applicable to broader areas as well. In fact I want to take a look at this whole concept of *authority*. We may not think much about it, but I believe it is very fundamental.

The believers in Rome were part of various churches, many small house churches with probably less than 25 people, so they were real people in a real time frame and would have known, for example, the Roman Forum of which the ruins can still be seen today.

We are in the book of Romans towards the end where Paul is applying the principles that he has developed in chapters 1-11. We are looking at how we are to apply these principles in the different areas of life, as living sacrifices living as God wants us to. We are now in chapter 13 seeing how the faith works itself out in society.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
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| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. <u>Application to Society</u> | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |
| a. Submission Foundation | 13.1-2 |
| 1) Response of Submission | 13.1 |

13.1 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.

The passage begins with 'every person', 'every soul' which is a way in the Greek language of referring to every person. It is very broad, without exception, in fact this a basic principle of life, kind of the default position. We will talk about it, but there are very, very few exceptions to every person being in subjection to the governing authorities. We want to develop this broad concept. Then follows this is the little phrase, 'there is no authority except from God'—including governments, all of the areas that God has established as authorities, 'all those which exist are established by God'. In other words, this is fundamental.

13.1 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.

13.2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

'Therefore whoever resists authority', ie, is not submissive but is rebellious, 'has opposed the ordinance of God'. We could even translate that the *decrees* or the *laws*, the *standards*, the essence of what God has revealed. And they who have opposed the ordinance of God 'will receive *condemnation*'—a very strong word—upon themselves.

At this point, not long before 70 AD when the Jewish nation was destroyed, the church is an entity of itself that is composed of both Jew and gentile, and we have not only instruction here, but also, eg, in 1 Peter 2.12. Peter writes to believers that are suffering and will be facing more under Nero the Emperor, the government. The persecution was now from the Roman government and not so much as it was earlier by the Jews.

12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

They are to submit to all authority and specifically government officials, even in the midst of persecution, or suffering. The default position, or the common, everyday position is that of submission. So every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. Let's take a look at the word 'authority' first, and then we will look at the word 'submission' because we have to understand the meaning of

‘authority’ in order to subject to it. This is an overview of the word that is used:

Authority

1. Term - ἐξουσία (ek-soo-sée-ah) authority, power
2. Usage

God - Jude 25 *to the only God our Savior; through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*

Of course the ultimate category that this word refers to is God himself. This is a key passage. His authority is before all time, now and forever—future eternal time. So the authority of God resides in Him. Psalm 62.11 says *all power* belongs to God. So He is the ultimate and final authority. God has created a universe where He has set it up as creator and He has delegated and set up authority in different realms.

Christ - Matthew 28.18 *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*

The great commission. All authority has been given to the Lord Jesus Christ as he gives the disciples the great commission. All authority or power—omnipotence—is given to Jesus Christ. It is in resurrection that He makes this claim.

Leaders - John 19.10

The context: Jesus is on trial before an evil ruler, Pilate, who is the governing ruler/authority of the day.
10 So Pilate said to Him, “You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?”

Pilate acknowledges that he has authority, though of course doesn’t acknowledge God as giving that rulership, but it is in government that people recognize authority. Notice Jesus’ response:

11 Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

Notice that Pilate has no authority apart from that which is given—from above, referring to God the Father. In other words, God has set things up such that He has *put* Pilate in a position of authority—God in His sovereign plan. This is an example of the most evil authority, on the verge of crucifying Christ, that has authority which is granted by God. There are other examples in the gospels, eg, Jesus gave them power to cast out demons.

2Corinthians 13.10 *For this reason I am writing these things while absent, so that when present I need not use severity, in accordance with the authority which the Lord gave me for building up and not for tearing down.*

This is the apostle Paul speaking here, acknowledging power that was given to him—all power is *granted*.

Angels/Satan/Demons - Colossians 2.15 *When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.*

Angels, Satan and demons also have no power except for the *permissive* will of God. The Lord Jesus Christ through His death basically conquered the authorities, referring to demonic spirits. Another verse referring to Christ is 2.10 *...and He is the head over all rule and authority*; probably referring to angelic rule and authority. Also, Colossians 1.16 *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him.* This also may be a reference to angelic creatures, rather than human or governmental authorities.

Context

1. Textual Context - Romans 13
2. Historical Context - Roman Empire
3. Theological Context

Those references with the word ‘authority’ or ‘power’ give you an idea of the theological context. But we will go a little further with this concept in a broader perspective of this idea of authority. The Importance of Authority and God’s perspective on it will help us to submit to authorities that are difficult to submit to—whether a wife to an evil husband or a government and officials that are ungodly and evil, even an unreasonable boss—we are under the same command in 13.1.

Importance

1. Within Trinity - 1Corinthians 15.27 *For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. 28 When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.*

All things are going to be ‘wrapped up’, but notice the subjecting of all things to the authority within the godhead. There is a hierarchy of power even within the Trinity. Even the Son is subjected to the Father. This is clearly taught in the

earthly life of Christ where He not only submitted Himself to the Father but also to earthly authorities and growing up, to His parents, which Luke mentions when He was 12 years old. So there is an authority in the Trinity, and a hierarchy. There is an equality as well, not a diminishing of equality, so has nothing to do with nature in terms of the Trinity, but there is an order, which is a part of the Trinity itself.

2. Ultimate Authority - Psalm 62.11 *Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God;*

The ultimate and final authority in the universe is God Himself. Romans 13 is telling us that God has set the whole universe up such that things function, particularly creatures function within a system of hierarchies, you might say. This is the way that God by design has set up the universe. He has established authority.

3. Fall of Satan - Isaiah 14.13 *“But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.*

At the heart of the fall of Satan, what was he desiring and attempting to do? He desired to establish his *rule*, his *authority*, his *throne*. That is, it's a *rebellion* against the ultimate authority of God Himself. That is at the heart of the fall of Satan.

The point here is that fundamental to sin itself is rebellion against God and particularly against God's authority.

4. Fall of Man - Genesis 3.1f *Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’”*

There is another authority speaking and making suggestions and creating doubt in the woman and it's doubt in the authority of God's word. Has not God said that you shall not eat of that tree? And she falls for the doubting of the heart of God's word. At the fall of mankind is this rebellion against authority.

5. Resisted by Cain - Genesis 4.1f ...8 *Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*

We see this worked out later in the resistance of Cain.

6. Rebelled at Babel - Genesis 11.1f ...4 *They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”*

There is a corporate rebellion against the authority of God and specifically what God has spelled out for mankind, at

Babel. The record shows man going directly against what God has said. That is rebellion against God's authority and what He has set up. As a result we have judgment at Babel.

Another result is the Genesis flood—a culture being so depraved and rebellious, so apart from God's authority.

There is rebellion against God's authority within the descendants of Abraham and the children of Israel, and you could trace it all the way into the church age.

7. Peaked with antichrist - Revelation 13.1f *1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.*

This is a picture of antichrist, drawing imagery from the book of Daniel. The dragon is granting authority to the antichrist.

3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast;

The dragon is Satan himself. Here the first beast who is the antichrist, but notice Satan has authority/power.

4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?”

Notice the word ‘authority’ throughout the passage, the same word as in Romans 13. This is the ultimate rebellion of the great Tribulation where there will be the most horrendous time that the earth has ever seen. That will be the product of rebellion against God and the authority of God Himself.

We saw in 1 Corinthians 15.28 the ultimate goal of all of history will be the subjection of all things to God, then the Son also to God, so that all things will be subjected to God.

1 Corinthians 15.28 When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

That is the ultimate goal of all world history: the ultimate subjecting of all things under the authority of the Father. Jesus Christ will effect that. The beginning of that will be when He returns, but it will be completed at the end of world history.

So this gives you a feel for the importance of authority and of choosing volitionally to subject oneself to the authorities that

God has established. Luke 4.6, the devil says, speaking to Jesus, *“I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.*

This is the devil’s admission that someone had to give him his authority. The same word, ἐξουσία (ek-soo-sée-ah) is the one in Romans 13.

We have to voluntarily submit to the authority that God has put *us* under. So this word ‘submission’ is the other key word we need to study.

13.1 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.

Submission

1. Term - ὑποτάσσω (hu-po-táh-so) putting something under
2. Meaning - military term: to line up under, to rank one under, to submit to authority
The idea is to line up under an authority, as in the military. We have the concept of submitting to any authority. In other contexts it is in the home with wife to husband, children to parents; on the job, to the employer.
3. Begins with Submission to God
It begins with Romans 12, submitting to the point of being a living sacrifice, not exercising our desire or will, but laying it on that altar.
4. Includes attitude of heart
Not simply the legalistic, outward submitting.
5. At heart of Christian life
This is at the heart of who we are as believers and it touches every area, every relationship—a heart-attitude of submitting.

13.1 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.

This is the reasoning: ‘for there is no authority except from God’ and those which exist within the demonic world and certainly within governmental authority, even amongst evil, unbelieving authorities—those which exist are established by God. That is the general, overall principle.

And God in setting up His entire universe under a system of authority, He has delegated some of that authority. In fact we see that very early. God is sovereign over the entire creation, by virtue of being

Creator, but in Genesis 1.28, He gives us one of the first divine institutions, the family. And in that context He has delegated authority to man to *rule* the earth.

Delegated

1. Sovereign over Creation - Genesis 1.28 *God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

So God has given authority over all the creation; He has granted limited finite authority over the creation and then He establishes the family as well. So we can talk about these divine institutions that He has established.

2. Divine Institutions

a. Views - social structures

There are different views on these social structures:

Secular - arbitrary conventions

The secular view is that these social structures like family, like marriage, even government are arbitrary conventions. They can be changed; you don’t have to have one man and one woman to make up a family unit—you can have two men or two women, however you want to change these arbitrary conventions. And it has moved to the area of government as well where different structures are set up that violate some of what God has established.

Biblical - Divine institutions

The Biblical viewpoint is that God has established and delegated authority within what we describe as divine institutions. They are not arbitrary, not changing; God has established them as part of the creation. They are foundations for the functioning of a culture and when we violate them we degrade and begin the degenerating process of any culture.

- b. Foundations of Culture marriage, family, masters, church, government

The first one God set up was marriage; then family. And we have the idea of authority: God has built marriage such that He has set up headship, Genesis 2. And He has established men—who need to take the responsibility of that headship. But women are called upon—not diminished in terms of personhood—to submit in terms of function. Remember that even within the Godhead there is submission. When we violate that

we are basically getting out of fellowship and not doing what God has designed and not functioning in the design He has established. Ephesians 5 and 6 deal with marriage, and children submitting and obeying parents. Also masters as authorities over, in that context, slaves, but we can apply that passage to our employment situation, our bosses.

God established government in Genesis 9 as a divine institution. He also established the church later on. And God has delegated, without exception, to use people like Pilate to bring about even the crucifixion, the provision of salvation for all of humanity. So God will use all of these institutions to effect His will within our lives, including government.

13.1 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.

No Distinctions

- > Monarchy, aristocratic, republic, democracy...
- > Totalitarian, atheistic, evil ...
- > Leaders fulfilling purpose or not
- > Unbelieving husbands - 1Peter 3.1f *In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,*
- > Exceptions

The are no distinctions in these areas of authority. There are some exceptions which we will see later.

A most important principle is SUBMISSION to AUTHORITY! All of us are called upon to be submissive to some authority. We are under the authority of government, but even government officials are under the authority of the constitution and even under the authority of God Himself. This is an important principle—one that we are tempted to violate at every point. We will develop this further.

[Romans 13.1-5 Government Function 177]

Submission Basis

1. Sovereignty in OT - Daniel 2.21 *It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding.*

Daniel was in Babylon under an evil totalitarian government that ruled the entire world. We will come back to the commands and decrees of totalitarian governments, but in general we submit because we recognize that God is sovereign over that Nebuchadnezzar or whoever is in charge, in whatever situation and in whatever divine institution. And as long as that ruler is there we can trust that God is permitting it, and we are called to submit.

37 *“You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory;*

Support from OT: those authorities that exist are established from God. Even in Daniel’s time, this concept was recognized and true. The king there is Nebuchadnezzar...and in chapter 4 we have the words of Nebuchadnezzar himself after God humbled him.

4.17 *“This sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men.”*

Even Nebuchadnezzar, after God had sovereignly intervened and humbled him—even a pagan authority—had recognized that God is the authority.

Psalms 2.2 *The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!” 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.*

We have the human perspective and then the divine perspective in verse 4, ie, men or rulers, husbands and church leaders make plans, designing things contrary to God—who laughs. Eventually, as the Psalm continues, He intervenes. It is a messianic psalm where God is going to bring the ultimate King. So, as we find ourselves in these situations we can trust that the sovereign God has a plan for us within whatever situation He has put us, a marriage, a church or within a certain government.

Jeremiah 29.4 *“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon,*

These are the exiles and God has revealed that they are going to be there for 70 years. He is saying: This is my will; you are in Babylon and there is a purpose here. So you need to fit into that system (as He explains in the next few verses) and basically function in that situation. The implication is: submitting to that authority.

5 'Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. 7 Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.'

That parallels and is very similar to what we have in the NT, ie, submit to that authority, work towards the welfare of that totalitarian evil system that just destroyed your entire nation, and left the city of Jerusalem and temple burning and in ruins.

Now you are in Babylon and you are to work to the welfare and betterment of that culture. They also had the promise that they would be released. The whole concept is one of *submitting*, even though the word is not there, working toward the benefit of the others.

We have a little bit of that in Romans 13, and not only that, but in 1 Timothy, we are to pray as Jeremiah also encourages in 29.7 because he could trust that God was using that time and they could just carry on normal life, even though in a foreign country, not trying to rebel, upon occasions, to get back to Israel—until God opened that door. And we see examples of Jesus Himself:

2. Jesus - Luke 2.51 *And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart.*

Jesus went home with his parents and continued in subjection to them. That's a 12 year-old, a pre-teen, the Lord Jesus, submitting to His parents, setting an early pattern which you see later on throughout His life, but He was trusting in a sovereign God.

John 19.11 *Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."*

Jesus speaks to Pilate who had just mentioned his authority... but Jesus told him that he, Pilate, had no authority except what God had given him.

3. Sovereignty in NT -

Stephen is an example, even unto death. Acts 7. 32 *'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.'* ...39 *"Our fathers were unwilling to be obedient to him, but repudiated him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt,...* 53 *you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it."* ...56 *and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."* ...59 *They*

went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

The apostles also have examples of submission.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. <u>Application to Society</u> | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |
| a. Submission Foundation | 13.1-2 |
| 1) Response of Submission | 13.1 |
| 2) Ruler of Authority | |
| 3) Reasons for Submission | 13.2 |

Now we see some reasoning behind this submission to authority.

13.2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

Rebellion within the husband-wife relationship, within the family with children, within the church, within the government is actually resisting the authority of God, opposing the ordinances or decrees.

God has even built in the the nature of creation authority by divine decree—the word 'ordinances' has the idea of God decreeing or establishing things relating to, eg, law, and in this case we can see not just mosaic law, but broader, in terms of natural law. He has built the universe such that authority is an essential part of it. And resisting that authority opposes those ordinances.

Submission

1. Term - ὑποτάσσω (hu-po-táh-so) putting something under
2. Meaning - to submit to authority
3. Resist - ἀντιτάσσω (an-tee-táh-so) to resist, oppose

Take a look at the word 'resist'. It is related to the word ὑποτάσσω (hu-po-táh-so), meaning to submit to authority. And notice that the word 'resist' is ἀντιτάσσω (an-tee-táh-so) hupo = under authority. anti = against authority. They are opposite prefixes.

13.2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

In some contexts the word has the idea of opposing, not just resisting but going beyond the resistance to opposing.

31.2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

And if they oppose, they will receive condemnation—a second reason is that there is damage that can be received as a result, judgment for resisting that authority. And it is brought on by themselves.

This is an introduction to verses 3-5 where Paul is going to expand and give some further reasoning concerning why we should submit.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. <u>Application to Society</u> | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |
| a. Submission Foundation | 13.1-2 |
| b. State's Function | 13.3-5 |
| 1) Ruler's Ministry | 13.3-4 |

So we have the *foundation* for submission and now the focus is on the *function of the State*, giving further reasons why we need to submit.

In verses 3-4 it is about the Rulers of the State itself or government. They have a *ministry*, an interesting choice of words that Paul makes, showing that they have a function, a role that comes from God. It supports the idea that authority comes from God and from God's perspective He has given rulers a stewardship. Now it is up to them to seek Him and it's up to them to function within parameters He has set. I think we have some of those parameters here in verses 3-5.

13.3 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.

The first parameter: 'For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior'. That is a reason why we should submit and not oppose or

resist authority. The design is that they are not intended to be a cause of fear for good behavior if you fit within the laws, do what is expected by the authority. Then there is nothing to be fearful of.

Rulers are not to function that way, causing fear. Now when rulers do, they are outside of the parameters that God has set for them. But it is not up to *us* to judge them or to necessarily remove them, other than as in our system we can vote, but other than that we don't 'revolt'.

13.3 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.

So rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior but for *evil*. This is part of the design of government and one of the purposes.

13.3 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.

Then he adds to that: We should fear authority, just as the Scriptures tell us to fear God, because God has instituted authority. In fact our fear of government should be related to that fear of God because there is that relationship between God and the authorities that He has established.

There are 3 primary roles of government and you see it elsewhere but they are summarized here in Romans. The first one, the purpose and main function of government, is the *Restraining of Evil*. At the heart of governments of all times, they have, in some measure, fulfilled this—have restrained evil—and that was part of the design of God.

Now unfortunately, some governments, because they are run by men fall into evil themselves and are the perpetrators of evil and evil policies. But that's not because God desires or condones it, but it's because, even though it is within the divine institution, the authority is delegated to sinful men. But the essence of the role of government is to restrain evil. Most governments have courts and a judicial system—a means of restraining evil. We can expand this a little looking up these verses:

Government Role

1. Restraining of Evil

OT Punishment - Exodus 21.22 "*If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide.*"

We can gather this from passages like Exodus 21, which is an expounding of the Mosaic Law, and passages in Deuteronomy. This is a very specific one. Notice that it includes punishment as well. So God established a system in the nation of Israel. It is an example in general of what governments do.

33 *"If a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, 34 the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead animal shall become his.*

The Mosaic Law is very specific in terms of the exercise of government, and in this case it is the Jewish government. And for violation of specifics there is OT punishment. From many passages in the Law we can come to some conclusions concerning the purpose of these laws and the purpose of government and the role of government. I think particularly in Israel these laws and the punishments that go along with them have lots of purposes:

They teach the concept of right and wrong. We can apply it in the church seeing what things are right, what things are wrong.

Certainly another purpose is to restrain evil. And, once you know what is wrong, then you want to avoid that. So the avoidance is another purpose of OT law and the punishment that goes along with it.

And the punishment is to deter the crime or violation.

But it also has a corrective aspect to it: rehabilitation, you might even say. You see that in Exodus 21.22, and 33-34, where there is restitution as part of the Mosaic Law.

And, you might say it is to prevent vengeance, ie, you don't take out individual judgment, as we saw in Romans 12, the vengeance of God. And one of the reasons God brings vengeance or justice is through the implementation of the punishment that is specified by the government.

So you have 5 reasons for the law, government and punishment that goes along with it and we could evaluate all governments on the basis of the way God set it up.

A little side study: What about prisons? Is that a Biblical concept? There are lots of examples. In Acts, Peter—and Paul—were thrown into prison. There are a lot of examples of prisons in the Bible, but they were not in the Jewish system.

Prisons

1. Not in Israel

2. Egypt - Joseph - Genesis 39.20
3. Philistines - Samson
4. Assyria - Hoshea
5. Babylon - Jehoiachin
6. Romans - John, Peter, Paul and Silas

The Jewish system executed justice; it was intended to be swift and in accordance with the crime. It included non-capital sentences where there was restitution.

13.3 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.

So the second role of government is the rewarding of good:

Government Role

1. Restraining of Evil
2. Rewarding of Good

In general the reward is peace, freedom to be able to function in a culture and to thrive. So, in some sense a condition of peacefulness is the reward of government as it maintains the restraint of evil.

13.3 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.

An interesting passage in verse 4: ...it is a *minister* of God to you for good.

13.4 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.

It is stated twice in verse 4.

Government Role

1. Restraining of Evil
2. Rewarding of Good

minister = διάκονος (dee-áh-ko-nos) servant, minister,
deacon (person)

διακονία (dee-áh-ko-neé-ah) service, ministry (work)

12.7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching

This is a spiritual gift—service. And in most contexts it refers to the ministry that people can have and it's a broad term—a variety of ways we can serve God. From God's perspective, in a divine institution, God has established authorities, rulers, kings, presidents *as serving a purpose*, or serving God in this function of administering government. They are held responsible for restraining evil and rewarding good. Of course, obviously there are *evil* rulers that fail in doing what God designs, but the divine intention is there.

13.4 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.

'But if you do what is evil, be afraid'. Now he is going to expand on the believer and, in the context, not submitting to authority and in fact resisting it.

13.4 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.

'for it does not bear the sword for nothing'. So within government there is the 3rd role: retribution of evil, or punishment of evil. And the sword is, which is the instrument of execution and it is even in the book of Revelation where God executes ultimate judgment, ultimate plagues and the punishment of evil.

It even involves capital punishment, which is part of the Mosaic Law. I think, in this context, Paul is seeing it as part of the function of punishment of evil which includes capital punishment. That is a Biblical concept, I think from Romans 13, a New Testament concept, as well as obviously the Mosaic.

And if you want to warn your children, pin Deuteronomy 21.18-21 on your refrigerator.

Government Role

1. Restraining of Evil
2. Rewarding of Good
3. Retribution of Evil

sword = μάχαιρα (máh-khah-i-ra) Instrument of execution
 Capital punishment - Deuteronomy 21.18 *"If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother; and when they chastise him, he will not*

even listen to them, 19 then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown. 20 "They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.' 21 "Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear.

This spells out a capital punishment for *children*. Can you imagine that? It is probably older children in the late teen age. So that is the 3rd role of government: the retribution or punishment of evil.

13.4 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.

He repeats 'for it—government—is a minister of God'.

13.4 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.

And, expanding it, 'an avenger who brings wrath'. This takes us back to chapter 12: we don't take out our own vengeance. God has established a means of dealing with problems within a culture, with crime, etc. God is the one who brings the vengeance and uses His instruments—part of the design of human government—on those who practice evil.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. <u>Application to Society</u> | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |
| a. Submission Foundation | 13.1-2 |
| b. State's Function | 13.3-5 |
| 1) Ruler's Ministry | 13.3-4 |
| 2) Reason of Conscience | 13.5 |

Now, reasons of conscience,

13.5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

Another reason for subjection:

13.5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

Not only because of wrath—the punishment we have just looked at...

13.5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

...but also for conscience' sake. So there is a spiritual aspect as well.

An application that is very important: teaching children the concept of submitting to authority. If they don't learn this concept, they will have a problem in school and if they still don't learn it in school, they will have a problem with the law, continuing throughout their life. And in some cases they will even die as a result of it.

Teach children the importance of submitting to AUTHORITY! They will have better marriages, better families, will be more productive citizens, better members of churches and they will be happier people if they understand the concept of authority.

[Romans 13.1-5 Reasons for Submission & Exceptions 178]

Now we look at these 5 verses to list the various reasons for submission. This was written to believers in Rome, under a different government circumstance than we are, but the principles are the same. And we have already mentioned that the beginning of 13.1 is, of course, inspired and applicable to even more situations than governments. We need to look at all these reasons which include even warnings.

Reasons for Submission

1. Nature of creation 13.1

God has created the universe with this concept within it. It includes even angels. The greatest angel, Lucifer, fell. At the heart of that was a resistance to authority. He sought to place *his* throne, ie, delegated authority, on an equal basis with God Himself. If you go against established order, His plan for the universe, resisting authority, there will be consequences, such as the Law of Gravity if you ignore it! It is going against nature.

2. Divine decree 13.2 God has established the authority which exists. Whoever resists is violating that plan, that created order, and therefore is opposing God.

Submission

1. Term - ὑποτάσσω (hupo-tásson) putting something under
2. Meaning - to submit to authority
3. Resist - ἀντιτάσσω (ahnti-táh-so) to resist, oppose

Reasons for Submission

1. Nature of creation 13.1
2. Divine decree 13.2
3. Resistance is rebellion 13.2-4
So resistance is rebellion, against the created order, against God's decrees, and obviously, bottom line: rebellion against God.

And those who oppose the ordinance of God will receive condemnation upon themselves. And the word 'condemnation', in the book of Romans, for the believer does not refer to ultimate condemnation (settled in the relationship of God to believers, 8.1: *therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*) There are consequences to violating God's decrees in terms of the law, government and even in terms of nature.

Verses 3-5 focus on the *function* of the state and how that condemnation is assigned to the institution of government. And Paul gives us the role of government. He views it as a *ministry*, 3-4. He explains how that is worked out with regard to society. There are consequences that should be feared, similar to the passages that encourage us to fear God as a righteous and holy God that can bring fear to the believer and judgment to the unbeliever. To avoid fear, do good, not evil.

A main function is to *restrain evil*. We looked at OT punishment. We saw the purposes to teach right and wrong, deter crime, do rehabilitation or restoration and to prevent vengeance. So another reason for submission to government is the danger of punishment.

Reasons for Submission

1. Nature of creation 13.1
2. Divine decree 13.2
3. Resistance is rebellion 13.2-4
4. Danger of punishment 12.2-3

Verse 3 continues: Do what is good and you will have praise from authority, so there are blessing from obedience. And the primary ones that we expect are the provisions the government makes for

freedom or opportunity to prosper and to pursue things that bring other blessings as well—to raise families, have protection from evil, etc.

Reasons for Submission

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Nature of creation | 13.1 |
| 2. Divine decree | 13.2 |
| 3. Resistance is rebellion | 13.2-4 |
| 4. Danger of punishment | 12.2-3 |
| 5. Blessing of obedience | 13.3-4 |

Verse 4 refers to government as a minister—which is a common word for *servant* or *deacon*.

Government Role

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Restraining of Evil | |
| 2. Rewarding of Good | minister = servant, deacon |
| | 12.7 minister = service ('gift of service'), ministry |

We can trust that as long as God allows an *evil* ruler to rule, He is sovereign, and we can submit to such a ruler. So he is fulfilling God's ministry.

Reasons for Submission

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Nature of creation | 13.1 |
| 2. Divine decree | 13.2 |
| 3. Resistance is rebellion | 13.2-4 |
| 4. Danger of punishment | 12.2-3 |
| 5. Blessing of obedience | 13.3-4 |
| 6. Fulfills God's ministry | 13.4 |

God will punish evil rulers in the end. An example is Jeremiah 50-51 where it says that Nebuchadnezzar went beyond the limit that God had given him when he sent Babylon against Jerusalem, so God will punish him—and destroy Babylon.

It is not easy, but God sometimes puts us under evil people: wives under husbands, worker under employer, sometimes even church leaders are dictatorial.

Government Role

- | |
|------------------------|
| 1. Restraining of Evil |
| 2. Rewarding of Good |
| 3. Retribution of Evil |

Government deals with sin, including Capital punishment.

Verse 5: Another reason for subjection to authority: for conscience sake. And this results in our losing fellowship. So if we remain in submission to all the divine institutions, we remain in fellowship.

Reasons for Submission

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| 1. Nature of creation | 13.1 |
| 2. Divine decree | 13.2 |
| 3. Resistance is rebellion | 13.2-4 |
| 4. Danger of punishment | 12.2-3 |
| 5. Blessing of obedience | 13.3-4 |
| 6. Fulfills God's ministry | 13.4 |
| 7. Staying in fellowship | 13.5 |

We will now look at exceptions, areas we struggle within submission to authority. Verses 6-7 are a specific example: if the government is evil and doing evil things, are we called upon to support it in terms of finances? But first we will look at some examples of exceptions. I have already mentioned that in general we have a broad principle of submission but we do also see some exceptions.

Exceptions of obedience

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Daniel - | Daniel 1.8-20, 6.4-24 | This story is familiar to us. Daniel is probably just a teenager, along with his friends. They were some of the early Jewish youths taken to Babylon during the captivity. They were training the youth in the ways of the Babylonians to make them good, useful Babylonian citizens—essentially slaves. Part of the training required certain diets—which probably violated the Mosaic Law. Daniel made a proposal, probably putting the authority over him at risk for not carrying out his job. But Daniel was very respectful, and the authority granted him his wish: to prove that he and his friends would be better if they took their diet of vegetables rather than the rich diet that was specified. On another occasion Daniel prayed to the one true God instead of the false ones, was reported, but was willing to suffer the consequences and was thrown into the lions' den where God protected him, honoring his faithfulness. |
| 2. Esther - | Esther 5.7-8, | there was a decree to destroy all of the Jews in the Persian Empire. Antisemitism. God had sovereignly put Esther into a position to be of influence. Much like Daniel, she was able to sway the authorities against what was decreed. |

So Esther replied, "My petition and my request is: 8 if I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and do what I request, may the king and Haman

come to the banquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king says."

Notice not only the *submissive and respectful attitude* but also the *wisdom of effecting a plan* in order to propose an alternative to the decree.

7.1 Now the king and Haman came to drink wine with Esther the queen. 2 And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done." 3 Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request; 4 for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king."

In terms of *our* culture, is it permissible to do a protest? To stand outside an abortion clinic and hold signs? In as sense Esther is making a protest, but it is done in great wisdom, in submissiveness, and under the favor of the authority. In this case, the request was granted. You might seek authority or use whatever position of authority God has granted you as he did to Esther. This might be a reason for some people to be called into the whole arena of politics, to be able to effect changes within the government. Again, we might learn and draw principles from this example which is not a command.

3. Daniel's Friends - Daniel 3.8-27. We are familiar with the three friends of Daniel.

This is a similar situation. They refused to worship the idol in chapter 3, and they were willing to suffer the consequences, but they could not violate the very first 2 commandments of the Ten. They refused to submit to the authority, but would suffer the consequences. God protected them through the fire of the furnace.

4. Disciples - In the NT, Acts 4.16-20, saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 "But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name." 18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; 20 for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Another example where the government is commanding them not to do something that God had clearly commanded them to do. They did not submit; they had to continue preaching the gospel—the great commission. They were willing to suffer the consequences.

It is an example. The danger of developing principles from examples is that sometimes we can take them too far. So you need to be very careful. I would say, be more conservative rather than stretching them beyond what I think is intended.

Another example: Acts 5.28 saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." 29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."

I think the principle is laid out there: when the government is commanding you to do contrary to what God had clearly commanded, I think the example, in this case, was that they had to obey God. Taking something too far might be to not pay taxes because God is against abortion.

5. Paul - Acts 22.25-29; 25.10-11. He is under house arrest and is falsely accused. There are some more principles of being under authority and in this case in danger of suffering a penalty even though falsely accused. Notice how Paul handles the situation: he is not belligerent, not abusive, is respectful, but also uses every legal means available to be able to alleviate the situation he is in. He claims to be a Roman citizen, so that gave him certain legal privileges. Then, when everything fails, he appeals to Caesar as a Roman citizen. Today we can also avail ourselves of the things that God has provided within the system, the government we are under. We let the law play itself out, but all the while our attitude is one of submissiveness.
6. Tribulation saints - Revelation 6.9,11. They are going to be put in a very difficult situation and some of them will die as a result of not complying. It doesn't state it overtly, but it does give examples of martyrdom as a result of the government. These are the extreme cases in the Tribulation period where believers will basically die for their faith.

So we can draw some principles from Paul's points in Romans.

Principles

1. Submission - This is the standard, ie, 99.99% of the time we submit, but we also submit in the midst of some cases of at least needing to resist. So submission is the overwhelming, not only attitude, but in 1 Timothy 2.1-3 is another thing that we do.

2. Prayer - 1 Timothy 2.1 This is what we do, not only to be submissive but that the sovereign God can work through the leaders that He has established as instruments.

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior;

This is what God desires—that we pray, regardless of the situation. Paul is exhorting believers under the Roman Empire in the 1st Century. It is Scripture and therefore applicable to whatever government. And we see examples of this in the OT under even more severe governments. We resist, starting with prayer.

3. Legal means. Paul is an example, as is Esther, using all the legal means available.
4. Influence and wisdom - Daniel, and we also have influence in our positions. We have means, opportunity and freedom to protest, for example.
5. Fleeing - There are examples in church history of believers that had the freedom to flee. A lot of the founders of the USA fled religious persecution even. The Huguenots, fled persecution in France and fled to England. The Puritans in England fled to America. That is a possibility as well in some circumstances.
6. Obey God - Daniel, the disciples. In general we obey God, in some circumstances, rather than the governing authorities. But we need to be willing to suffer the consequences.

I think there are two situations: when the government issues decrees against God's clear prohibitions, eg, Daniel: God prohibited the worship of idols. They had to obey God rather than man—and suffer the consequences.

The other situation is when it is against God's clear commands. With the disciples, God had given the great commission and the government was clearly against God's clear commands. That is what I see in Scripture, and most of the time we are called to submit.

A function of the church is to be proclaimers of righteousness, but we cannot demand and insist upon what we exhort, all we can do is try to exert the effort to be the influence that we can be. Unfortunately many Christians are not even doing the basic of voting. But there is always an opportunity to share the gospel with a neighbor or someone close to us.

[Romans 13.3-7 Church Role under Government & Taxes 179]

In this divine institution of Government that God has set up, what is the place or function of the Church? How should the church respond since we are members of it?

Government Role

1. Restraining of Evil
2. Rewarding of Good
3. Retribution of Evil
4. Role of Church

13.5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

It affects our relationship with God if we are not submissive.

I have found several major things describing the Role of the Church in relationship to the government. There are six areas. I don't want to get into too much of politics, but I do think there is a relationship that I think we need to recognize and this is the context to do it. We will talk about activism after considering the role of the church, ie, how much believers should be directly in the government itself.

Role Of Church

1. Proclaim truth

I think the first and most important role of the church is to set the the spiritual and truth parameters and to proclaim them within society. Our role or relationship is one of submission, but that does not mean that we are silent.

In fact I think God expects the church to proclaim and broadcast the truth to the extent that it is able—and certainly some individuals can do that to a greater extent than others, and some churches are in a position to do it even on a national scale. So I think what that includes, essentially, by God's design, is the conscience of government and it *should* be. Now sometimes that truth is rejected and sometimes, probably in general, it is ignored, but that should not stop the proclamation of the church.

So as individuals or corporate bodies week by week we proclaim the truth and usually to our own, but within that, it affects the entire culture. And when there is opportunity to proclaim on a broader scale, ie, radio or other media, I think it promotes good government in that it is a means of setting parameters for church leaders. And if there are leaders within the church, obviously it shapes their thinking and hopefully affects their spirituality and their heart.

So I think promoting morality and truth is a primary function and the number 1 area in which the church has an

affect on government itself. Of course, the truth is proclaimed primarily for the believer and for the body of Christ, but it should spill over as well. It should defend Biblical truth and Biblical morality, eg, issues of life that get into the political realm, and have impact on government policy.

So I think when the church speaks out on issues like abortion it is within what God has designed, so that includes issues of life at the beginning and end of life. Confronting the evil of the culture is part of the ministry of the church and sometimes the extent of that is limited but we are to be the salt of the earth in terms of communicating what God has intended with His standards for the believer and for mankind in general, and obviously for leaders as well.

The church has absolute truth. The government does not. In fact, secularism oftentimes goes against absolute truth and it is the church that serves as the conscience of society.

The rest of the areas are some of the specifics:

2. Protect family and divine institution

One of the most important areas of society is the family, and certainly government has an impact on family but it's the church that basically protects the family from the rest of the culture. So all the issues related to *family* are included. And obviously governments today, and our culture, have the family under attack, trying to re-define it, to extend it into immoral areas—areas contrary not only to God's design, but God's will—so I think it is appropriate to speak out against some of those distortions of the family.

That would include other divine institutions that may be under attack in the culture—again, this is the area of proclaiming God's standards and His truth in relationship to the family. The family is so huge—it is the main building block of society and culture. So within the church we nurture and encourage the family and the proper relationship of husband and wife and children. We want to protect the family. This is important when there is an unbelieving and a believing parent; the children have a split spirituality presented to them,, leaving them without a complete nurturing of the truth.

3. Promote biblical justice

We need to make a distinction here because there is a lot of talk about social justice. There is a lot of distortion in that area and a lot of policies that actually are contrary to *real* justice. So you want to include Biblical justice which includes areas of prisons and how that is so out of balance in our culture. In fact I

heard that we have more prisons in the United States than in any other country, and yet we have a higher crime rate than nearly every other country. I haven't verified that, but we certainly have lots of prisons and prisoners; we talked about the Biblical perspective on that previously.

But when we talk about justice it includes the whole realm; there are a lot of unjust laws that can be passed. We can speak of individual justice within the body of Christ and fairness and treating people right. But we live in a culture also, and our influence can be felt on an individual basis. And to the extent that God leads you it may spill over into some activism that we will discuss.

I think that Biblical justice would include supporting the constitution because this is a very precious document that is under attack as well. It was designed to promote, initially I think, Biblical justice, but to some extent has been distorted. An attack on the police system—which is an example of a portion of the divine institution of government—in fact goes against the intent of that particular role, and does damage overall to justice in the culture.

4. Protect national sovereignty and Israel

Another area is protecting national sovereignty and I mention it because I think we miss it. But there is a movement today toward world government. That is unbiblical and contrary to the design. In fact you could consider nations, which are by God's design, as a divine institution. You have to go back to Babel to get the essence of it and then you see the outworking of it in history.

We have already studied Genesis 12, but let's look at Acts 17.26. When we speak of national sovereignty, I think God's design is that there be individual nations, starting with Babel. God intended that the peoples scatter and fill the earth. And then, after Babel, we see the formation of nations.

You can think of God creating His own national entity, the nation of Israel, and He is the one throughout its history, who protected it, disciplined it, formed it, and gave promises concerning Israel that they would be a blessing—to all peoples, all other nations. In fact Israel has done that.

There is also within that Genesis 12 passage and others relating to the Abrahamic Covenant, a promise that nations will be judged on the basis of how they will treat Israel. So when it comes to the government and the political realm you need to support policies that support Israel. Otherwise you are inviting God's discipline upon the whole nation.

Acts 17.26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation,

Notice: nations are from God and they came from one man, but He is the one whose sovereignty has orchestrated the rise and fall of nations. They have a certain 'shelf life', or life-span. In some of them He intervenes and removes and judges, and He raises up others. So they don't last forever, but they serve a purpose. Notice that this passage, Acts 17.26, supports this idea of borders which are under attack at the moment in the U.S. Borders are Biblical and part of what God has established.

There are other passages, such as those that deal with the nation of Israel, which set forth very specific boundaries for notably the 12 tribes within, but the extent of the whole nation. And because of the Genesis 12 passage every nation will be accountable in terms of their relationship with Israel. So that is an important area that I think we have a Biblical basis for.

I think part of suppressing evil is God's design of having nations, to not allow the concentration of power within one totalitarian system. That goes back to Babel. And we have lots of examples in world history of totalitarian systems that always end up suppressing and oppressing the people: Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome and there is a future Babylon predicted. I think the design of God is to have power distributed such that they serve as a check for one another. And notice that verse 27 starts with a purpose clause, a very broad purpose laid out for government or nations.

Acts 17.27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

Notice that purpose clause: the purpose that God has for nations is that it provides a means, and even totalitarian systems, *a means by which people may seek God*. And sometimes it is under the harshest of circumstances that people are forced to look beyond earthly things and look to God.

5. Provide for the poor

I think this is primarily the role of the church, not the government. In fact all the injunctions in terms of the poor and doing things that provide for them are always on an individual basis—never applied to any government in any passage in any Scripture. So that speaks to a lot of the social programs that we have given up to government, at least in the U.S.A. today.

6. Pay taxes (responsibility of all)

And, let's talk about the paying of taxes which is the responsibility of all, not just the church. But first a look at activism.

Place of Activism

1. No biblical teaching

There is no Biblical teaching that I am aware of other than principles that you can draw as we have been doing here, but nothing direct, nothing explicit and, in the US we have the privilege to vote. Christians have a tendency of abandoning the social realm and abandoning their involvement.

2. Privilege to vote

Everyone should be involved; I think this is a part of our civic duty and part of submitting to governing authorities and to giving our voice. We have the opportunity to have an influence.

3. Biblical priorities

First we should maintain our Biblical priorities within the body of Christ, within the family and as we have energy to go beyond that then I think that as God opens up opportunities then we can take advantage of those as He leads.

4. Government service

And for some, I think God leads them to run for office and to occupy positions of influence. And, apart from office, you can exert your influence. We looked at Daniel, and talked about how he was able to have influence as was Esther and others. There are some denominations that think you should not be involved at all, but I don't think that is a position supported Biblically.

5. Calling to activism

And I think there are some called to be more active; I don't think it's unbiblical as long as it is done with Biblical principles. As long as you keep your Biblical priorities and then as you have energy and time you can be involved.

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|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. <u>Application to Society</u> | 13 |

1. Submission to Authority 13.1-7
 - a. Submission Foundation 13.1-2
 - b. State's Function 13.3-5
 - c. State's Financing 13.6-7
- 1) Explanation on Taxation 13.6

Paul also writes about the important aspect of our responsibility to government in praying for government leaders.

1 Timothy 2.1 *First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.*

13.6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

'Because of this', because of the function of government and because we are called to be submissive, because of these things in this context,...

13.6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

Now we have the explanation: 'you also pay taxes'. It is in the indicative mood, it is not imperative, even though some Bible teachers and commentators think that the indicative mood can be used as an imperative. I tend to stick with the indicative because it is in verse 7 where we do have the exhortation. You pay taxes because the government needs financing and this is the means that God has set up to finance government.

Terms

1. Pay - τελέω (tay-lé-o)

bring to an end, finish, pay

Actually this is a rather unique usage in this context. In general, you have see the word τέλος (téh-lahs) which is in this context also. It has the idea of bringing something to an end, or to finish something. This is the root word that Jesus used when He was on the cross in that perfect tense where He says, 'It is finished.' Here in this context and in others it has this idea of putting an end to a debt, or an obligation. It is translated 'pay taxes'.

History of Taxation

Briefly we will run down this whole history of taxation.

1. Joseph in Egypt - Genesis 41.34 *"Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers in charge of the land, and let him exact a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance.*

The first reference to a 'tax' is Joseph in Egypt. Joseph is interpreting the dreams for Pharaoh and there are two dreams with the interpretation that there would be 7 years of plenty and then 7 years of famine. During the 7 years of plenty the advice of Joseph to the Pharaoh is to put away grain—and this is the plan of which Joseph is the administrator. And in that, it was 20% of what people accumulated.

2. Mosaic Law - Leviticus 27.30 *'Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S; it is holy to the LORD. 31 'If, therefore, a man wishes to redeem part of his tithe, he shall add to it one-fifth of it. 32 'For every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. 33 'He is not to be concerned whether it is good or bad, nor shall he exchange it; or if he does exchange it, then both it and its substitute shall become holy. It shall not be redeemed.'*

Then in the Mosaic Law, there was a tithe. A 'tithe' was one tenth. Under the Mosaic Law and under the nation of Israel the tithe was not a *gift*. We, as a church, have turned it into an example of giving. It was not giving; it was a *tax*. It was a requirement that supported, not only the Levites and the Levitical system and the Tabernacle y then the Temple, but it financed, essentially, the government of Israel. The tithe was a tax, not 'giving'.

There were other requirements of the Mosaic Law of freewill giving and offerings that were freewill. In fact there were at least 3 tithes. There was another tax in Deuteronomy 12 for national feasts. And a third one was for the needy; the government took that money to provide for the poor. So adding them all up, it was about a third of a person's annual income that was essentially a tax. Of course they were a theocracy, not a church, and they were the means by which they ministered in every way to His people. Israel had kind of a composite government; it dealt with society, with all of the economic issues, and certainly it dealt with the relationship with God. It was somewhat unique compared to other nations. And it was part of the means that God provided to meet some of the needs of needy people. But there were also the freewill gifts that people gave.

3. Kingdom - 1 Kings 12.3 *Then they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to*

Rehoboam, saying, 4 “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

During the kingdom, in fact in 1Kings 12 part of the situation there was an issue of taxation. Solomon imposed a heavy burden. And after he died, the leaders came to Rheoboam and said they were under a heavy burden of taxation. He disregarded their advice and the kingdom was divided.

4. Near Israel’s end - 2Kings 23.35 *So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land in order to give the money at the command of Pharaoh. He exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, each according to his valuation, to give it to Pharaoh Neco.*

Near the end of Israel’s history there is reference to heavy taxation. During the exile, the people of the land that Israel was now returning to, complained to the king and said that he would not get any taxes if he let them settle in the land of Israel.

5. Exile - Ezra 4.13 *“Now let it be known to the king, that if that city is rebuilt and the walls are finished, they will not pay tribute, custom or toll, and it will damage the revenue of the kings.*

6. Rome - Matthew 22.17 *“Tell us then, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?” 18 But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? 19 “Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.” And they brought Him a denarius. 20 And He said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” 21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.” 22 And hearing this, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away.*

We looked at Matthew 22.21: “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.” That was a tax to Caesar.

7. Temple - Matthew 17.24 *When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?” 25 He said, “Yes.” And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?” 26 When Peter said, “From strangers,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are exempt. 27 “However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when*

you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me.”

And there was a Temple tax, and there were other taxes in the Roman Empire besides that mentioned in Matthew 17.

13.6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

This is a different word from the one that we saw earlier that also could be translated ‘servants’. And this one is used in the service of priests in some contexts. And in terms of government it would be used of an official or leader or king or governor.

Terms

1. Pay - τελέω (tay-lé-o)
bring to an end finish, pay
2. Servant - λειτουργός (lay-tour-gáhs)
service of priest, of official

13.6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

That is, this is part of the ministry that God has set up, part of the divine institution, that those that are in positions of authority have this as part of their responsibility—to devote themselves to the work of the role and the function. And the instruction here is to provide the finances that are needed to maintain the functioning of a government.

Terms

1. Pay - τελέω (tay-lé-o)
bring to an end finish, pay
2. Servant - λειτουργός (lay-tour-gáhs)
service of priest, of official
3. Devoting - προσκαρτερέω (pros-kahr-tay-réh-o)
devoted to prayer, 12.12: rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation

This is also related to spiritual things. The word is only used about 10 time in the NT, and I think a third of them are used in the context of being devoted to prayer. So it has a spiritual relationship as well.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God’s Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God’s Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God’s Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |

- A. Application to God 12.1-2
- B. Application to Church 12.3-21
- C. Application to Society 13
 - 1. Submission to Authority 13.1-7
 - a. Submission Foundation 13.1-2
 - b. State's Function 13.3-5
 - c. State's Financing 13.6-7
 - 1) Explanation on Taxation 13.6
 - 2) Exhortation on Taxation 13.7

13.7 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.

Here is the command. It's an obligation because God has set it up and He is specific:

13.7 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.

'tax to whom tax is due', and then he specifies further aspects. He uses a broad, overarching word for taxes in general, tribute, taxes.

Terms

- 1. Pay - τελέω (tay-lé-o)
bring to an end finish, pay
- 2. Servant - λειτουργός (lay-tour-gáhs)
service of priest, of official
- 3. Devoting - προσκατερέω (pros-kahr-tay-réh-o)
devoted to prayer 12.12
- 4. Taxes - φόρος (fór-ahs)
tribute, taxes

13.7 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.

Then more specific: 'custom to whom custom'.

Terms

- 1. Pay - τελέω (teh-léh-o)
bring to an end finish, pay
- 2. Servant - λειτουργός (lay-tour-gáhs)
service of priest, of official
- 3. Devoting - προσκατερέω (pros-kahr-tay-réh-o)
devoted to prayer 12.12

- 4. Taxes - φόρος (fór-ahs)
tribute, taxes
- 5. Custom - τέλος (téh-lahs)

There are varieties of taxes. There were all kinds of taxes in the Roman system. They taxed everything, virtually all commodities. So these probably refer more to things imported and exported; there were taxes in the system for those. At any rate, indirect taxes, customs...

13.7 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.

And then 'fear to whom fear' and there are some totalitarian leaders that demand respect and even elicit fear, so fear to whom fear is due.

13.7 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.

And 'honor to whom honor'. There are some leaders who are good and godly and deserve honor and you can give them honor.

Be an activist for Christ: pray and be the salt of the earth.

[Romans 13.1-7 The Millennial Government 180a]

We have been talking about the Christians in Rome in the 1st Century and their living in the Roman Empire. Their situation was far more dire than ours, but yet they were called upon to submit to the governing authorities.

We want to conclude the discussion on government from 13.1-7 and then we will focus on the broader relationship to the culture or to the society which is about loving the citizens. This was the exhortation of Paul to the Roman citizens in the 1st Century.

I have been stressing that the only way we can accomplish the application part of the book in chapters 12-15 is if we have already set our mind on the relationship between us and God. And that is one of *submitting*, dying to self and sacrificing ourselves on an altar to God—a *living* sacrifice ready for life, ready for action. And if we are in fellowship—as in Paul's way of emphasizing remaining in fellowship, remaining connected, in God's will—then we are in a place to have an impact and live the Christian life within the body of Christ. 12.3-21.

And we are in chapter 13 on how it has worked out in society: what living for Christ, as a living sacrifice, looks like amongst the broader culture. He started with our relationship to government and then he

broadened it to the people themselves or the citizens. Completing that we will look at Christian liberty, 14-15.13. That is the broader context.

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|---|-----------|
| I. Introduction | 1.1-17 |
| II. Provision of God's Righteousness | 1.18-8.39 |
| III. Vindication of God's Righteousness | 9-11 |
| IV. Application of God's Righteousness | 12.1-15.3 |
| A. Application to God | 12.1-2 |
| B. Application to Church | 12.3-21 |
| C. <u>Application to Society</u> | 13 |
| 1. Submission to Authority | 13.1-7 |

And, having discussed the whole area of submission to authority, I would like to conclude with a *perspective of the future and that ultimate hope* to give us a focus because, regardless how bad or evil the leaders are, no matter the circumstances we live in, the Lord always encourages us to focus.

Actually Bible prophecy finds a lot of its setting amongst people that are suffering. Some of the OT passages were written while the children of Israel were about to enter into exile, the Daniel and Ezekiel portions while they were *in* exile, suffering under foreign, evil powers. Then, Bible prophecy is intended to give us a future perspective so that we can endure whatever government or circumstance we find ourselves in today, regardless how we might disagree with the leaders and policies we find ourselves under—socialism, even totalitarianism.

That is the point of verses 1-7. We are to submit to governing authorities. We looked at some exceptions. One is when the governing authorities command us to go against the clear things that are God's will. And the second is when we are commanded to do those things are clearly prohibited by Scripture. They are broad categories, but there are not too many areas that are outside those two categories.

So let's look at this ultimate hope, or ultimate government as I call it. I have put together a couple of sheets about ideologies, kind of a Biblical evaluation of progressivism and/or liberalism. You can request them and I will e-mail them. One of them is comparing conservatism with progressivism.

God is working out a plan. God's intention, beginning with Genesis 1.28, one of the purposes of mankind is to subdue and rule the earth. That was given to Adam and Eve; it was their responsibility.

God established a people and their kingdom but because we still have a sin nature, even though David was a king after God's own heart, he still was a sinner and his descendant, Solomon was of like nature. At that point, God was ruling the world through the nation of Israel, but because of the sinfulness of man and of the citizens, Israel collapsed as

a nation. We await the establishment of a future, ultimate kingdom with the sinless King reigning, and regenerated people populating that kingdom.

So let's look at some of the passages that deal with that. Now it seems that within the heart of man there is a desire for a utopian all-encompassing government. And there have been a lot counterfeits, ie, attempts to consolidate that rule. So man has that inward sense of rulership, but because of sin it is always perverted and corrupted. We have seen a lot of counterfeits, beginning in Babel where there was a desire for a united, utopian government. But it was contrary to God who wanted the peoples to fill the earth and spread, so we have the confusing of the languages. And then there was the rising of the nations. I tried to convey the idea that I think that nations are God's design until we can come to this ultimate government. One of the purposes of the nations is to kind of hold them in check so that power is not concentrated into one small group. Therefore totalitarian government is the outcome of man's effort to unite and try to consolidate.

The examples after Babel include a long list of totalitarian governments like the Egyptian Empire and the Syrian Empire. Under all these governments people are oppressed, power is abused, mankind loses freedom and is in desperate situations. The Babylonians are another example that destroyed the nation of Israel, the Medo-Persians that destroyed *them* similarly though perhaps not as evil as Babylon... Greece, Rome...and then there will be an ultimate one following a future totalitarian 'revived Roman Empire' as some describe it, during the Great Tribulation. But it will fail as well; that one will beheaded by antichrist, totalitarian, oppressive, and most of the people that become believers during that time will die—will be martyred. There will be lots of be-headings as described in the book of Revelation.

So man fails ultimately at government, no matter the type or form. He anticipates and awaits what God will establish.

Ultimate Government

1. Ultimate subjection to Christ - Philippians 3.21 *who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.*

The subjecting of all things to Christ. So God is in the process of *subjecting* things throughout world history. And we do it voluntarily.

Hebrews 2.8 **YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.** "For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

The writer of Hebrews, in the 1st Century, says that not all has been subjected yet, but that's the ultimate goal.

1Peter 3.22 *who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.*

That's where Christ resides now, at the right hand of God, and He is in the process of bringing things under subjection. And when that is completed, at least partially, He will return and begin the process of completing the subjection of all things. He will rule in the Millennial Kingdom and will be that Millennial sinless King, without a sin nature. He will rule initially over the nation of Israel, and also there will be a hierarchy of rulership within that Millennial Kingdom. This will be an ideal government and Christ will rule—as in this well-known passage:

2. Millennial King - Isaiah 9.6 *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;*

That's the incarnation.

And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

This Messianic passage is a description of the reign which will be fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 1.32, This is before Jesus is born, a prophetic statement concerning the coming birth of the Lord Jesus:

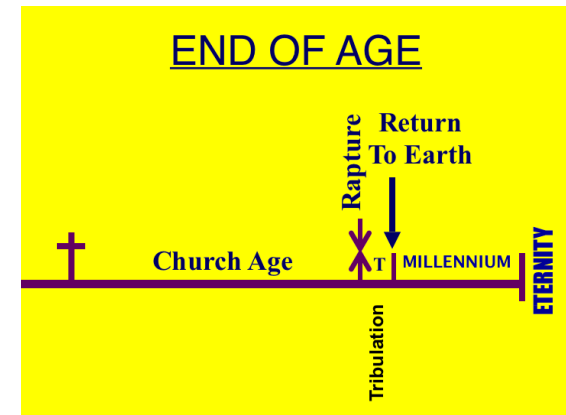
32 *"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."*

This is before the baby Jesus is even born. Notice that these passages stress *righteousness* and *goodness* and *reigning* and in Revelation 19.16 He will be *King of kings and Lord of lords*. So He will reign in the Millennial Kingdom; there will be this ideal, earthly government. At the end of the 1000-year reign, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire to demonstrate the ultimate failure of mankind. Other passages include Ezekiel 34.23-24, 3.25 and

Jeremiah 30.9 *'But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.*

Remember, Jeremiah was written many years after David lived, so here is a prophecy of God raising him up. And the hierarchy: I

think David will reign under the Lord Jesus Christ and he will rule the nation of Israel.



3. Rule of Believers - 2Timoteo 2.12 *If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us;*

That passage has nothing to do with losing one's salvation; if you read the context, it has everything to do with living out the Christian life faithfully, and are called 'overcomers' in Revelation. It is important how we live *now*. If we live faithfully now, we are promised that we will also rule with Him. If we do not live faithfully, the 'denial' is that we will lose the opportunity to have a rulership. That does not mean that we will not be citizens of the Millennial Kingdom, but it means losing one's reward. So it is important how we live.

Revelation 2.26 *'He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father;*

That is another reference to the nations—non-Jewish groups—and the reference is to this future rule. There are other passage that indicate that, Danial 7.27, eg, which talks about Israelites in the OT having a part in the Millennial Kingdom and, in fact even sovereignty and power handed over to the *saints* the people of the most high. In that context Israel is referenced, so Israelites will be a part of this Kingdom and even a part of the rulership. But the church and believers will have a part in ruling over the *nations*. The

Hebrew word is ‘go-yím’, the NT, Greek, is ἔθνη (eth-náy) and is translated *nations* or *gentiles*.

So, depending upon one’s faithfulness in this life, during the Millennial Kingdom there will be rulership delegated to the believers. This is the ultimate government in which you and I will be administrators to the extent that we are faithful here and now. You can also read Matthew 25. The third parable there is a description of the end of the Tribulation period and the separating of the sheep and goats. And clearly, in that parable, it identifies *nations*, God judging the nations, and the believers will enter the Millennial Kingdom and the unbelievers will essentially die. They will be judged and will come back to life at the Great White Throne, but they will not be a part of the Millennial Kingdom—only believers will enter the Millennial Kingdom.

And the first two parables in Matthew 25 pertain to the nation of Israel. So there is a distinction always maintained and those 2 parables will be an evaluation of those that enter the Kingdom and those that are faithful. Only at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom all will be regenerated citizens with the sinless Messiah reigning—King of kings and Lord of lords.

But over time in this earthly, physical kingdom they will be in physical, mortal bodies. We will be in spiritual bodies, because we will be resurrected. So there will be 2 kinds of people, and over a thousand years people—the mortal believers will have babies. (Isaiah 65.20 states there will be children and youth.) They will have to accept the Lord Jesus Christ, just like everybody else.

We don’t have a lot of detail but the book of Revelation by way of implication indicates that by the end of the Millennial Kingdom there will be enough unbelievers so that when Satan is released, there will be a rebellion at the end which kind of seals for us the depravity of man, ie, man is ultimately responsible for his own sin—he can’t blame it on Satan, on his neighborhood or on the country he grew up in.

Then comes the Great White Throne judgment. I see Revelation 20 as describing the Millennial Kingdom and Revelation 21 and 22 the Eternal State. So 21 and 22 are beyond history, with a new creation with a new heavens and new earth after the old heavens and earth have been destroyed as described in 2Peter 3.

And then after all of world history is completed we have another passage. It is the end of world history when there is ultimate subjection to the Father:

excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. 28 When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

That is the whole goal of world history, the goal of God’s plan: to be ‘all in all’, all glory will be attributed to God Himself. And notice even Christ will be subjected to the Father. We talked about the fact that within the Trinity there is a hierarchy, not a diminishing in equality but an eternal hierarchy: Father, Son and you might even include the Holy Spirit. This is one of the verses that indicate that.

4. Ultimate subjection to Father - 1Corinthians 15.27 *For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is*