



ADULT CLASS JULY 5, 2020

ROMANS 13:1-7 – The Christian & Government

Intro:

A. Passages to keep in mind as we study: Rom. 12:17-19; Js. 1:19-20; 1 Tim. 3:1-3

I. Some background to Paul's comments.

A. Much of the civilized world was controlled by Rome during Paul's life.

B. At the time he wrote to the church at Rome, Nero Claudius was Caesar.

1. Nero by most accounts was a wicked person.

a) *Towards the end of his reign Christians were persecuted greatly.*

C. Paul had unjustly suffered much at the hands of the government. – 2 Cor. 11:23-25

1. He was no stranger to being mistreated by the authorities and this would only increase.

D. During his ministry, we can see Paul using the laws to his advantage.

1. His appeal to Caesar in Acts 25

2. His demand to be publicly released when he was beaten unjustly in Acts 16.

3. Yet, we find no account of him taking part in or promoting any form of civil disobedience anywhere.

II. THE RULE...

A. Stressed twice by Paul – Rom. 13:1&5

B. Peter also taught this. – 1 Pet. 2:13-14

1. Submit means "be subject to"

2. Signifying "to place one's self under subjection; to render one's self subordinate"

a) *This indicates a chain of command*

3. We are to submit "to every ordinance of man"

a) *The word "ordinance" literally means "a creation"*

C. Who is required to be in subjection to the governing authorities? – Rom. 13:1

1. Every soul called upon to do this.

2. Even Christ Himself seemed to recognize His place in respect to the governing authorities. – Jn. 19:10-11

D. Our responsibility is clear: "Let every soul be subject".

III. THE REASON...

- A. Governing authorities have been appointed by God! – Rom. 13:1
 - 1. This is emphasized in the book of Daniel. – Dan. 2:20-21, 4:25, 4:17
 - 2. Sometimes these rulers may be evil (“lowest of men”). – Is. 10:5-7
- B. Therefore to resist government means to resist God Himself! – Rom. 13:2
 - 1. To resist is to bring judgment upon one's self.
- C. The government is a minister of God, designed to avenge evil. – Rom. 13:3-4
 - 1. Certainly, there are exceptions.
 - 2. Yet the rule is that governments protects those who are doing good.
 - a) *Paul instructs Timothy to pray for the rulers to allow this. – 1 Tim. 2:1-2*
- D. Obedience to the government keeps us from experiencing its wrath.
 - 1. Those who are not speeding do not have to fear a speeding ticket.
 - 2. Those who do not cheat on their taxes do not have to fear the wrath of the IRS.
- E. The Christian’s reason goes beyond this. We obey for conscience sake. – Rom. 13:5
 - 1. It’s the right thing to do.
- F. Peter gives two good reasons for obeying rulers. – 1 Pet 2:15
 - 1. First and foremost, "this is the will of God"
 - 2. That we may "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men"

IV. THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE...

- A. It is not whenever government is oppressive
 - 1. Again, consider the government and conditions when Paul and Peter wrote
 - 2. Paul and Peter were eventually martyred
- B. The only exception: we must obey God rather than man!
 - 1. As illustrated by Peter and the apostles. – Acts 4:18-20, 5:27-29
 - 2. When government tries to force us to disobey God, we must disobey the government.
 - 3. Even then, we may break only the particular law designed to force disobedience to God.
 - 4. We have no authority to break other laws in protest to the unjust law.
- C. Practical examples for us today; what is the Christian’s reaction?
 - 1. Wearing facemasks if the government requires it.
 - 2. Meeting to partake of the Lord’s Supper when assemblies have been forbidden.

V. WE MUST PAY WHAT IS DUE – Rom. 13:6-7

- A. As an act of submission we should pay our taxes.
 - 1. Since the government serves the people, it is only right that we should pay for those services.
- B. We may not approve of how the taxes are spent.
 - 1. Can we say that God instructs us to be good stewards of our money and since the government wastes it, we are justified in not paying our taxes? – Mat. 22:19-21

Conclusion: PAY, PRAY & OBEY!