

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Romans 13:1

CONCLUSION

Romans 13 calls for obedience to government as part of obedience to God, yet it allows room for civil disobedience when laws conflict with God's higher commands. Our ultimate submission is to God, but we honor His order by supporting just governance and seeking peace where possible.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- How the Nations Rage: Rethinking Faith and Politics in a Divided Age by Jonathan Leeman
- Mohler, R. Albert, Jr. The Gathering Storm: Secularism, Culture, and the Church. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2020.
- Russell H. Conwell, Baptists and the American Republic (Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society, 1910).

Christians Relationship to Government

By thoughtfully engaging in how we approach and respond to government, Christians provide answers that reflect our faith principles, making this area a meaningful subject within apologetics.

OVERVIEW OF ROMANS 12-16: PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE GOSPEL

Chapters 1-8 Recap:

- Paul outlines humanity's sinfulness and need for salvation.
- God's provision of salvation through Christ, justification by faith alone.
- Spiritual blessings from union with Christ.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you *therefore*, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Five Key Relationships (Romans 12-13)

1. To the Lord (Romans 12:1)
2. To Self (Romans 12:3)
3. To Fellow Believers (Romans 12:4-5)
4. To Enemies (Romans 12:17-21)
5. To Government (Romans 13:1-7)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS ON GOVERNMENT

1. Should Christians reject government under a new King (Christ)?
2. How should our faith shape interactions with rulers we disagree with?
3. In what ways does our relationship with God influence our view of earthly authorities?

We have church members serving inside of 7 different governments.

1. Constitutional democracy: South Africa
2. Presidential republic: Turkey, Indonesia, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Benin
3. Federal republic: Nigeria, Mexico
4. One-party socialist republic: China
5. Democratic republic: Taiwan
6. Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government: Japan
7. Parliamentary constitutional monarchy: Spain

As we pray for our missionaries..

- *Pray for the election of godly leaders and that godless leaders will not hold positions of government. — Job 34:30*
- *Pray that unrighteousness will be exposed in your leaders and that God will remove them, if that is His will. — Psalm 5:10*
- *Pray that corrupt leaders will see the evil of their ways and repent. — 2 Peter 3:9, 2 Chronicles 32:12-13*

Three Principles concerning Civil Government

1. Governing Authorities are Ordained by God
 - Romans 13:1: “The powers that be are ordained of God.”
 - Examples: Pharaoh, Roman rulers during Jesus' time, and even oppressive regimes are seen as permitted by God for His purposes.
2. Governments as God’s Servants for Order
 - Romans 13:2-5: Authorities should promote good and punish evil, carrying out justice as “servants of God.”
 - Reflection: How do we honor rulers who seem ungodly while acknowledging God’s sovereignty?
3. Christians Support Governments by Submitting to Laws and Paying Taxes
 - Matthew 22 & Romans 13:6-7: Jesus and Paul uphold the principle of paying taxes and honoring authorities.
 - Practical Application: Showing respect and honor to leaders through our actions and speech, regardless of personal opinions.

Subversive Nature of Paul's Message

- Implications: While urging submission, Paul proclaims that ultimate authority belongs to God alone.
- A Christian’s loyalty is first to Christ, which may challenge allegiance to human governments.

Biblical Examples of Limited Submission

- Peter and John’s Civil Disobedience (Acts 4:18-19, 5:27-29)
- Hebrew Midwives’ Disobedience (Exodus 1:17)
- Daniel and His Friends (Daniel 3, 6): Refused ungodly orders but maintained respect for authority.

Practical Discernment for Modern Christians

- Assessing Governmental Commands: Does it compel disobedience to God?
- Evaluating Conscience: Are we being asked to violate personal conviction rooted in Scripture?
- Considering God’s Commands: Is there a clear directive from God that a government is prohibiting?