



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Romans 115 Christian & Government – Part 02 Romans 13:1-7

**Romans 13:1-7**, *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. <sup>4</sup> For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. <sup>5</sup> Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. <sup>6</sup> For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.*

Christian's responsibility to government.

Paul writes instruction to Timothy.  
It is instruction for the church.

**1 Timothy 3:15**, *but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

**1 Timothy 2:1-4**, *Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and <sup>lc</sup>reverence. <sup>3</sup>For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

This is behaviour principal for the church.

Two Essential points:

First, **we are to pray**, intercede, supplicate, and give thanks to God for kings and all that are in authority in order that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

If we want to live a quiet and peaceable life, to be able to walk as God wants us to walk, and enjoy peace so that we can live

out our godliness our approach is to pray for those in authority over us.

We do not affect our rulers by protest.

We do not affect our rulers by disobedience.

We do not affect our rulers by revolution and uprising,

But by prayer.

Man coming to know God and that is God's desire.

**Jeremiah 29:7**, *And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace.*

This is a message to the Jews in captivity in Babylon.

You are captive.

You are prisoner.

You have been taken hostage.

But you seek the peace and pray for that.

If you want peace in a society, to enjoy your faith, and to spread your faith, then pray for those in authority over you. That is the God-designed pattern.

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**, *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down*

*strongholds,<sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,*

The most powerful weapon we have as believers to pull down strongholds of the enemy of God, are the weapons of prayer.

For Christians, revolution has no place. Pray has the priority place.

When it comes to political changes, or governmental issues, you simply pray.

If you are going to be thrown in prison, make sure you are thrown there not for a political protest, but for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, the goal of that kind of praying is a quiet and peaceable life in order that we will have opportunity to **see men saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.**

We pray that God will allow us the privilege of living peaceable, quiet life to radiate the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

The tranquil, quiet, peaceful life is to be the distinctive mark of a Christian.

**1 Thessalonian 4:10-12**, and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; <sup>11</sup> that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, <sup>12</sup> that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.

Study to be quiet.

Learn to seek peace.

All we can expect from government is protection of life, and property. If it does that, it serves God's intended purpose.

Unfortunately, in our own society, I think we see some failures, even in those areas.

Countries, in part, fails in the protection of life with its millions upon millions of abortions. But in spite of those kinds of things, as Christians, we must pray and live a peaceful life, influencing the world, not by political protests, not by efforts to overthrow the government.

But by godly living and bold, confrontive, forthright, preaching of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. That must be our message.

The prophet, Amos, Nahum, and Malachi, we have every right to confront the sins of our society from the viewpoint of the Word of God.

But not to engage in political acts of violence or overthrow or uprising or protest or revolution against the government.

**Titus 3:1-2**, *Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup>to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*

**Titus 3:8**, *This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.*

We are called again, to a spirit of submission to those in authority over us, a life of godliness, a life of good works, a life which seeks peace. That is the unmistakable principal.

**V 1**, *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities.*

The bottom-line command given to Christians.

It does not discuss their character, their qualifications.

- Whether they are good or bad,
- Whether they were elected or appointed,
- Whether it is a republic or a monarchy.

It doesn't discuss any of that.  
It says we are to be subject.

**Matthew 23:3-4**, *Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.<sup>4</sup> For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

They have a God-given place of authority.  
They were hypocrites.

But their authority is granted by God, even though they were perverse men in their own hearts.

Some, in spite of the clarity of this command, persist in disobeying it, not only in our society and in our culture, but in others as well.

- ✓ Jesus never taught His people to storm the government.
- ✓ Jesus never taught His people to revolt against the king.
- ✓ Jesus never taught His people to kill unjust rulers.
- ✓ Jesus never taught His people to march on city hall.
- ✓ Jesus never taught them to barricade the administration building.

Didn't matter what the form of government was, that was no issue.

We are supposed to reach the world.

In order to reach the world, we have to demonstrate a godly, virtuous, peaceable kind of life so that what we possess and what we have is attractive to others.

If we are to let our light shine in a perverse and wicked generation, it must be the light of the glorious gospel that shines in the face of Jesus Christ.

There is only one occasion tolerated in Scripture where we will violate this command.

When the government demands us to do what God forbids us to do, or demands us not to do what God commands us to do.

**Exodus 1:15-21**, *Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah;<sup>16</sup> and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live."<sup>17</sup> But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.<sup>18</sup> So the king of Egypt called for the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this thing, and saved the male children alive?"<sup>19</sup> And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian*

women; for they are lively and give birth before the midwives come to them.”<sup>20</sup> Therefore God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and grew very mighty.<sup>21</sup> And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them.

### **What was the greatest blessing to a Jewish person?**

To have a family.

They disobeyed because they would be in violation of a command of God.

They would be murdering, and they could not overstep the law of God.

Daniel who refused to do what the king said, because it would be in violation of what God had said.

Daniel is instructed by the Babylonian monarch to take the food of Babylon and eat it. To do that would have been to violate that which he knew to be laws revealed by God, for the Jews had very circumspect dietary laws, and he would not defile himself with food that was not prescribed by God.

Yet, in all of Daniel's attitude there's a spirit of submission.

**Daniel 1:8-16**, *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the*

*chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. <sup>9</sup> Now God had brought Daniel into the Favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. <sup>10</sup> And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king." <sup>11</sup> So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, <sup>12</sup> "Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. <sup>13</sup> Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants." <sup>14</sup> So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days. <sup>15</sup> And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies. <sup>16</sup> Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.*

Daniel could have protested.

- He could have revolted.
- He could have been disrespectful to the one over him.
- He could have badmouthed the king.
- He could have done all kinds of things.

But Daniel sought a conciliating means to obey God in the midst of a difficult situation.

But he would not compromise.

Later on, **Daniel chapter 3**, Daniel's 3 friends refused to bow down to the idol image. As a result of that, they had disobeyed the king.

They were told to bow down.

They would not, because they couldn't bow down to the king when God had told them to bow only to Him.

They were true to God.

**Daniel 3:16-18**, *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. <sup>17</sup>If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. <sup>18</sup>But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."*

- They did not speak any evil words against him.
- They were not disrespectful.
- They called him by his proper title.

They simply said, "We will not do this. But we are more than happy to suffer whatever consequences you feel are just for our seeming misbehaviour."

Again, their attitude is remarkably conciliating and gracious in the light of what they might have said.

**Daniel 3:30**, *Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.*

They got a promotion because the king surely appreciated men with great conviction.

He also wouldn't mind having people on his team who could walk through fiery furnaces.

### **Daniel chapter 6.**

Daniel in the lion's den.

Now in the Medo-Persian kingdom moved from Babylon.

There is absolutely nothing wrong for anyone serving in a government position.

There is nothing wrong with serving in a civil government role or a state government, or any other kind of leadership.

That is an honoured position.

Daniel is the single best example of that in the Scripture. Every time he was uncompromising, he got a greater reputation.

Because of his uncompromising spirit, he was constantly promoted till he finally became the prime minister of the whole nation, the whole kingdom.

It is an honourable thing to serve in government.  
It is not a dishonourable thing.

Daniel prayed. Those princes that wanted to get rid of Daniel got the king to sign an edict that no one was to pray to anybody, no one was to give obeisance to any other god.

Of course, Daniel went on with his prayers. He went on with doing what he knew was right before God.

He was thrown into the den of lions. But he was not at all disrespectful.

**Daniel 6:21**, *Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!"*

Daniel understands that the powers that be are ordained of God. He is submissive in a unique sense, and very trustful that no matter what that king does to him, he's in the hands of God.

**Daniel 6:28**, *So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.*

Daniel's no-compromise approach, along with his friends, meant disobeying the government. But his attitude is a model for all those who come to that crossroads of having to face the reality that you can't do what the government says, or you can't not do what they say to stop doing.

He never wavered from honouring the king, and neither did his friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

They were never disrespectful.

- First, normally we obey, respect, and do everything in response to and to please those in authority. We are to be model citizens, obedient not only outwardly, but obedient in spirit.
- Secondly, we resist and disobey only when we are commanded to do something the Word of God forbids or are forbidden to do something the Word of God commands.

These two things are illustrated in Daniel's life.

Daniel would not do what the Word of God forbid, that is, eat a certain king of food. He would not stop doing what God commanded him to do, and that was pray.

- Thirdly, even when government and the Word of God conflict, we should not disobey overtly until we have done all we can to try to resolve the conflict peacefully.

***To try to resolve the conflict peacefully.***

- Fourthly, if disobedience is necessary, we must be willing to suffer the consequent punishment.

If we are called to obedience and our government says, "You are going to be punished for that. We don't care if it is what you believe to be biblical," then we have to quietly and peacefully accept that punishment.

Just as Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah did when they went into the fiery furnace, just as Daniel did when he went into the lion's den.

All we simply do is commit ourselves to the safekeeping of the One who we are obeying.

But at all times Daniel says "Oh, king, live forever."

We never have anything other than a respectful and honouring attitude to the authorities who are over us.

This speaks volumes of the integrity of the Christian faith. It also speaks loudly and clearly about the fact that Christianity is not a political viewpoint.

It is a matter of soul salvation.

Paul unfolds the reasons why this principal is valid.

We are to be subject to the powers that are over us.

**Why?**

He gives seven reasons, seven very logical, connected reasons.

They flow out of each other, and actually, even overlap.

## **1. The powers that be are ordained by God.**

*V 1, Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

All, government is by divine decree.

Civil authority in any form comes directly from God.

It's an institution like marriage is an institution.

In a sense, it doesn't matter who the couple is, it doesn't matter what their lifestyle is, it doesn't matter the level of their commitment, marriage is an institution of God.

God designed for the passing on of society's preservation and meaningful relationships.

The church is an institution of God, and so is government.

Government is an institution of God.

**V 1**, *For there is no authority except from God,*

There is no power anywhere in existence that isn't reflective of the purpose and will of God.

There is no power anywhere that is not representative of God's authority. No civil government exists in any nation of the world, never has, or ever will, apart from God having instituted it.

**Psalm 62:11**, *God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God.*

- ✓ All power belongs to God.
- ✓ All creation belongs to God.
- ✓ All things belong to God in heaven and in earth.

The entire world belongs to God. Man, and all of his social contacts, and all of his social connections is only what he is and

relates to who he relates to by the creative act and purpose and will of God.

- ✓ God, who created the world, controls the world.
- ✓ God manages the world for His own purposes.
- ✓ God alone is sovereign.

Anyone who possesses any sovereignty on earth has delegated sovereignty.

God alone has sovereign rights, undelegated.

So, all authority comes from the Lord.

It doesn't matter what that authority is.

**What about Communist China?**

**What about Russia?**

**What about BJP government?**

Yes! Every Government is from God.

All power that exists is ordained of God, and there is not any power that is not reflective of a God-ordained authority.

God is the ultimate sovereign.

**Acts 17:26**, *And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,*

God is the one who has designed and created nations.  
The length of their duration on the earth and the breadth their identifying and signifying marks. So, the gift of authority is a divine gift.

No tyrant ever seized power without God allowing him.

**What about the cruel governments?**

How can you say that about communist governments?

How can you say that about Adolf Hitler?

How can you say that about abusive kinds of government?

**How can you say that those are ordained of God?**

I didn't say it.

I just read it.

The Bible said it.

There is no power but of God.

**If it is a power, it's ordained by God then what about the cruel abuses?**

The cruel abuses and the injustices and the wrongs of governments are no reflection of God's holy nature, and no reflection of God's holy will, any more than divorce in a marriage is a reflection of God's holy will.

But marriage is no less an institution of God.

Though there is apostasy in the church, the church is still an institution ordained of God. But the apostasy is no reflection of the nature of God.

No, abuses do not deny the sacredness nor the divine trust and authority in any of God's institutions, be it the home, the church, or the government.

Frankly, men abuse all God's gifts.

Wicked rulers are part of God's plan to punish wicked nations, and to allow evil to run its course toward destruction.

If the truth were known, and perhaps someday in heaven, God has designed by His sovereign purpose and will a reason for every government that exists on the face of the earth.

Some are for the benefit of those who have done well.

Some are for the punishment of those peoples who have done evil.

We cannot second-guess why God institutes a certain kind of government in a certain place.

God has ordained government to protect and preserve men, to protect their life and their property.

To do that, there must be the role of government to repress evil, to repress crime, and to hold up and honour those who are virtuous and good.

**V 1, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.**

The majority only reflects the sovereign purpose of God. The powers that be our God's design. Any form of governmental power.

The government is in place by the decree of God. It is the time for God to do in a nation what He chooses to do. It is expressive of the divine will.

- Sometimes He wants to punish a nation.
- Sometimes He wants to prosper a nation.
- Sometimes He wants to bless a people.
- Sometimes He chooses to judge a people.

But government in all its form is by divine decree.

## **2. Resistance to government is against God.**

**V 2, Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.**

If you resist the government, you resist the institution of God.

Because God is the power behind all government.

Whosoever has and continues the permanent attitude of resistance against the government, whoever ranges himself against the government by refusing to support, by disobeying, resists God.

Christian brothers and sisters in Russia will make no resistance against their government. If they are imprisoned, it will be simply and only because of their love and proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was not consequential whether the Roman emperor was kind or good, whether he was a persecutor of Christians, or a lover of Christians. It was not consequential whether he was elected by the people, whether he was appointed by the senate, or whether he took over in a military coup.

It was not consequential whether the assertion of imperial authority by Caesar was just or unjust, whether he was wicked or whether he was basically good. None of that was consequential.

It was simply and only that government, as it exists in any situation, is for the purpose of God in that situation.

Resistance and rebellion against that government is resistance and rebellion against God.

Unless it is obvious that the government has overstepped its bounds and is forcing you to do that which is contrary and counter to all that Scripture indicates. God operates in the maintenance of government. We obey.

We honour that government whether the president or the governor or the senate, house, the police, whatever it is.

**Do you remember David's horror when he had occasion to kill Saul?**

David wouldn't do it.

He understood this truth of honouring the one in authority.

It was so important in Israel to teach children this that the penalty for a disobedient child, one who was disobedient to his parents, was death.

So, government is divinely decreed, and to resist it is to resist God.