

Romans

Lesson 17: Romans 13:1–7

In the first eleven chapters of Romans, Paul has given us the theology of man, sin, and salvation. He has told us how a sinner can be justified by God’s grace through faith in Christ. In chapter 12, Paul told us, “Present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God . . . And do not be conformed to this world.” Although believers no longer live *for* the world, we are still *in* the world. What does it look like for a justified believer to live in this world? In chapter 13, Paul will tell us what it looks like for a Christian to live in this world and yet not be of the world. In the first seven verses he will specifically talk about how Christians are to live in relation to the governing authorities who have been established by God. Let’s dive in and see what God says about living in subjection to the government.

➤ **Read Romans 13:1–7**

1. According to verse 1, who is to be in subjection to governing authorities?
2. According to verse 1, who establishes authority? Why is He able to do that? What does this tell you about “governing authorities”?
3. In verse 2, what is resisting authority equal to?

Application: Is there ever a time where God allows a Christian to resist authority? Give biblical examples.

4. In verse 2, those who oppose the authorities “will receive condemnation upon themselves.” Where will this condemnation come from?
5. According to verse 3, who are those who **do not** fear rulers? Who are those that **should** fear rulers?
6. According to verse 3, if you “do what is good,” what will you receive from the government?

Application: There are obvious exception to receiving praise from the government when you do good and honor the Lord. Read Luke 21:12–17 and Philippians 1:12–14. How does honoring the Lord bring about good?

7. According to verse 4, what is the role of government?
8. How does verse 4 relate to what Paul said in 12:17–21?
9. In verse 5, what two reasons does Paul give for subjection to government?

Application: Have you ever had an encounter where your conscience drove you to obey governing authorities? Explain.

10. In verse 5, who exercises the “wrath” that Paul references? (Hint: see verse 4)

11. In verse 6, why are believers to “pay taxes”?

12. In verse 7, what is the Christian’s obligation toward governing authorities?

13. In verse 7, what is the Christian’s attitude toward governing authorities?

Application: Read Luke 20:20–26. How does this shed light on Romans 13:7?

Application: Read 1 Timothy 2:1–4. What is your attitude toward governing officials? What are some ways your attitude needs to change? Pray and ask God to help you.

Application: What one verse impacted you the most in this study? Explain.