

## Romans Chapter Thirteen

The Command to Submit to Government Authority (vv. 1-2)

**VERSE 1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities** (Πᾶσα

ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασέσθω. [*adj.nom.m.s. pas every + noun nom.f.s. psuche soul; person + noun dat.f.p. exousia authority + pres.act.part.dat.f.p. huperrecho govern + pres.pass.imper.3s. hupotasso be subject to*]).

**For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established**

**by God** (οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, αἱ δὲ οὖσαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσὶν [*neg ou + conj. gar + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + part. ei + noun nom.f.s. exousia authority + neg. me “except” + prep hupo by + noun gen.m.s. theos + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.f.p. eimi + prep hupo by + noun gen.m.s. theos + pf.pass.part.nom.f.p. tasso appoint, institute, establish*]).

**VERSE 2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God**

(ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν, [*conj. hoste with the result that + d.a.w/pres.mid.part.nom.m.s. antitassomai resist + d.a.w/noun dat.f.s. exousia + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + d.a.w/noun dat.f.s. diatage ordinance + pf.act.ind.3s. anthistemi oppose*]); **and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves**

[οἱ δὲ ἀνθεστηκότες ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήψονται [*d.a.w/pf.act.part.nom.m.p. anthistemi oppose + conj. de + pro.dat.m.p. heautou themselves + noun acc.nt.s. krima judgment + fut.dep.ind.3p. lambano receive*]).

**ANALYSIS: VERSES 1-2**

1. Believers responsibility with respect to the establishment chain of command falls under the category of the “good and acceptable and perfect will of God” as per Rom. 12:2.
2. So in verses 1-7 we have an all-important presentation affecting the life and witness of believers.
3. Without exception every individual is to be in subjection to the laws of divine establishment and those who administer the law of the land.

4. No individual is free to violate the authorities who are chosen to maintain law and order.
5. The second line in v. 1 states the reason for the command in line one.
6. Paul speaks of the existing governmental authorities with the Roman Empire.
7. He states that these authorities “are established by God.”
8. By this he means that they derive their right to rule ultimately derives from God.
9. Regardless of the form of government we are to obey the administrators of divine institution #4.
10. Those who resist civil authority resist God.
11. God establishes the civil authority to punish violators of the laws of the land.

#### No Need for Fear, Unless (vv. 3-4)

**VERSE 3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil** (οἱ γὰρ ἄρχοντες οὐκ εἰσὶν φόβος τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἔργῳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κακῷ. [*d.a.w/noun nom.m.p. archon ruler + conj. gar + neg. ouk + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi + noun nom.m.s. phobos fear + conj. alla but + d.a.w/adj.dat.nt.s. agathos good + noun dat.nt.s. ergon work + conj. alla + d.a.w/adj.dat.nt.s. kakos bad, evil*]).

**Do you want to have no fear of authority** (θέλεις δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν· [*pres.act.ind.2s. telo desire, want + conj. de + neg. me + pres.dep.infin. phobeomai fear + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. exousia*])?

**Do what is good and you will have praise from the same** (ποίει, καὶ ἔξεις ἔπαινον ἔξ αὐτῆς [*pres.act.imper.2s. poieo do + conj. kai + fut.act.ind.2s. echo have + noun acc.m.s. epainos praise + prep ek + pro.abl.f.s. autos “the same”*]);

**VERSE 4 for it is a minister of God to you for good** (θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν. [*noun gen.m.s. theos + conj. gar + noun nom.m.s. diakonos minister + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + pro.dat.m.s. su + d.a.w/adj.acc.nt.s. agathos good*]).

**But if you do what is evil, be afraid** (ἐὰν δὲ τὸ κακὸν ποιῆς, φοβοῦ· [*part. ean if + conj. de but + d.a.w/adj.acc.nt.s. kakos evil, bad + pres.act.subj.2s. poieo do + pres.dep.imper.2s. phobeomai be afraid*]); **for it does not bear the sword for nothing** [γὰρ εἰκὴ τὴν

μάχαιραν φορεῖ [*conj. gar + neg ou + adv. eike vain + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. machaira sword + pres.act.ind.3s. phoreo wear; "bear"*]; **for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil** [θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν ἕκδικος εἰς ὀργήν τῷ τὸ κακὸν πράσσοντι [*noun gen.m.s. theos + conj. gar + noun nom.m.s. diakonos minister + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + adj.nom.m.s. ekoikos "an avenger" + prep eis + noun acc.f.s. orge wrath + d.a.w/pres.act.part.dat.m.s. prasso practice + d.a.w/adj.acc.nt.s. kakos evil*]].

#### ANALYSIS: VERSES 3-4

1. The prerogative of rulers arises from divine appointment (v. 2).
2. This appointment validates the punishment that rulers administer.
3. Those who are law-abiding have no reason to fear those who punish wrong-doing (crime).
4. The authorities under D.I. #4 are to maintain law and order and generate fear in would-be criminals.
5. The fear that rulers evoke serves to restrain criminal activity so the law-abiding can live in a safe and prosperous environment.
6. The apostle's teaching emphasizes the execution of the punitive toward criminals, and this is fully supported by God the author of nationalism.
7. The question poised in v. 3 expresses more fully the opening statement in this verse.
8. If we abide by the laws of the land we should have no fear of governmental authorities.
9. Paul declares that if we follow local and national laws we put ourselves in position of gaining the praise of those who administer the laws of the land.
10. This good citizenship standing is to be cherished.
11. The designation "minister of God" should remove any human viewpoint notion that the state is simply the lesser of two evils (the greater being the criminal element).
12. For believers who honor the divine institution the administrator of justice is a minister for good.
13. Apart from the establishment chain of command we could not pursue in peace the directive will of God.
14. The civil authority is God's servant to whom we should accord dignity and respect.
15. The good we derive from their efforts is defined in 1 Tim. 2:2 (we are to pray "for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and dignity.").
16. Pray for these individuals so we can continue uninterrupted as a local assembly.
17. The negative alternative is that if believers engage in unlawful activities they have cause for fear.
18. The reason we should be afraid is stated as "he does not bear the sword in vain."
19. The "sword" here represents the punishment of criminal activity.
20. This includes everything from fines to prison sentences and capital punishment (cf. Gen. 9:6).
21. So rulers and administrators of justice are ministers of God's wrath when the system functions as it is supposed to.

## Primary Motivation for Believers to be in Submission (v. 5)

**VERSE 5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake** (διὸ ἀνάγκη ὑποτάσσεσθαι, οὐ μόνον διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν [*conj. dio therefore + noun nom.f.s. anagke necessity + pres.pass.infin.hupotasso be subject + neg ou + adv. monos only + prep dia + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. orge wrath + conj. alla but + conj. kai also + prep. dia + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. suneidesis conscience*]).

## An Example: Taxation (vv. 6-7)

**VERSE 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing** (διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ φόρους τελεῖτε· λειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἰσιν εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκαρτεροῦντες [*prep dia + pro.acc.nt.s. touto + conj. gar + conj. kai also + noun acc.m.p. phoros tax + pres.act.ind.2p. teleo finish; "pay" + noun nom.m.p. leitourgos servant; Ix + conj. gar + noun gen.m.s. theos + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi "are" + prep eis + pro.acc.nts. autos this + pro.acc.nt.s. houtos very + pres.act.part.nom.m.p. proskartereo devote oneself to*]).

**VERSE 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** (ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς, τῷ τὸν φόρον τὸν φόρον, τῷ τὸ τέλος τὸ τέλος, τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον, τῷ τὴν τιμὴν τὴν τιμὴν [*aor.act.imperr.2p. apodidomi render + adj.dat.m.p. pas + d.a.w/noun acc.f.p. opheile what is due + d.a.dat.m.s. + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. phoros tax + noun acc.m.s. phoros tax + d.a.dat.m.s. + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.s. telos end, "custom" as in Matt. 17:25 + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.s. telos + d.a.dat.m.s. to whom + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. phobos fear + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. phobos + d.a.dat.m.s. + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. time honor + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. time*]).

**ANALYSIS: VERSES 5-7**

1. In v. 5 Paul makes an observation of the main reason for our subjection to the laws of the land.
2. The primary motivation should be out of a sense of obligation to God.
3. This is what he means by “for conscience sake.”
4. Fear of punishment is secondary.
5. Compare 1 Pet. 2:13 “for the Lord’s sake”).
6. In order for a nation to provide all the things necessary for the pursuit of happiness it must be supported by taxation.
7. “Because of this” refers to our sense of the good conscience before God and men.
8. In the second part of v. 6 “this very thing” to which they are devoted is the collection of taxes.
9. Revenue collection is described from the standpoint of tax collectors (“ministers”) and their mental attitude (“devoted”).
10. Paul here does not address the abuses that are so common within the ECC.
11. In v. 7 the imperative “render” is followed by three things we are to willingly render.
12. The first two are two types of taxes.
13. The first is tax levied on persons and property (Lk. 20:22).
14. “Customs” refers to tax levied on goods (sales tax).
15. The other two things we are to render involve the mental attitude in dealing with government officials.
16. The fear here is not the same as in v. 3, rather it refers to showing respect.
17. Honor is closely akin to fear in this context.