

Romans 13

1 submit = Strong's Greek Number 5293

A Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader". In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".

Paul is under the reign of Nero who will execute him, but he may have learned from Cephas - put away your sword - If my Kingdom was of this world then would my servants fight, but now is my Kingdom not from hence. God puts rulers in place. If there were none there would be no order and anarchy is worse than a bad government. All governments are established by God but not all governments obey God or serve him. See next comment.

2 How does this fit with the American Revolution? World Wars? Serving in the military? Peter and John's balance was, "we ought to obey God rather than man." Acts 4:19 The NT creed was "Jesus is Lord" which was in direct contrast to Caesar is Lord. Paul had to correct any misconceptions that we are here to overthrow world powers and set up a physical kingdom. That would be an easy error to fall into in that day. Some believers had been zealots and the creed seemed anti-government when in fact it is PRO-JESUS.

3 This is generally true - law breakers are punished by an authority ordained by God. But what about persecution? Is it an exception? For doing the right thing of preaching the Gospel Paul was beheaded. In a sense that was an honor and nothing to fear. Paul must be referring to common crime and anti-government thought.

4 Those zealots who would soon bring the wrath of Rome on Jerusalem, could be the subjects of this message. They did meet that sword in 70 AD/ which was a short time after this letter. In this light, the destruction of the Temple was God's doing through his servant Rome. The persecution that spread Christians all over the world was too.

5 You should be convicted when you consider breaking a law, or plot against the government. Great chapter for militant Christians who are talking of storing guns etc. God is the One who sets up and takes down governments.

6 The Israelites hated the taxes and the tax collectors but Paul is saying to drop the attitude and see the civil order and good that comes from it! Just like elders are supported to give their full time to oversight of the flock, so government officials should be supported by those who benefit. How this must have flew in the face of many and yet how Christ-like to get the focus on what matters, not the things of the world that irritate you.

7 We should never shirk what is required of us by the government or the conscious. Just because the position is appointed by man remember it is God's providence behind the appointment and surrender honor to whom honor is due. Where does that leave bad mouthing government officials?

8 These two verses endorse debt free living. It would also seem to speak against bankruptcy. But it allows the debt we all should keep an awareness of - the debt of love for our fellowman, following Jesus example. 12:10

9 Love is the fulfilling of the Law. How well we know this, how little we practice it! 12:9,10

10 This implies the Law is to keep us from doing harm to each other. The Law is guidance to keep us from sin. Sin is rebellion against God the Creator, so sin is destructive - opposite of create - to mankind. Real love shares Christ, prefers others to self, is patient, keeps not record of wrongs...see 1Cor 13

11 Love right now because...our salvation is close, the day we see Jesus, redemption from the physical body, eternity in His Presence. So wake up - lets stop conforming and start transforming the world around us with LOVE of God.

12 Time to wake up! Stop walking around in the stupor of this world that says " live for pleasure, worldly goods, and fame." Wake up and live for what is eternal! The time draws closer even though it was not in their lifetime. Paul was only a few years from his execution. So were many of the martyrs in Rome who died alongside him. It is our task to, 'by the Spirit put to death the misdeeds of the body' . We do the acting (let us), but by the Spirit. Put aside the one (deeds of darkness vs 9,12) and put on the other(armor of light, love). Just like I dress each day so I must dress in the Spirit, like I chose my clothes. It is the outer me that people see. Which clothes will people see you in today? Is the armor of light the same as Ephesians 6 armor? Certainly truth and righteousness are light. All the items go back to the Word for their source, which is Light.

13 Acts that are definitely deeds of darkness. Of these we justify dissension the most readily but or culture calls for all these to be 'tolerated'. Dissention includes what Paul was addressing with the anti-government folks. It happens too often within our churches. There is legitimate dissention when things are not Scriptural but then the issue should be the word of God - not personal preference. When leaders fall, whether one Sr. Pastor or a group of wayward elders, confrontation with the word is not dissention but correction in righteousness and love.

14 Here is a description of the armor of light, the word that was made flesh. Step into your Jesus suit and show the world what He looks like. Superman has nothing on us! We got more power and a better suit. Watch your mind when it tries to contemplate satisfying the flesh. (Do not think how to gratify) You can choose to stop it in the stage of temptation before it goes on to sin. Chase the birds of temptation away before they build a nest that will destroy you.