

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 20TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

## SUBMISSION (ROMANS 13:1-7)

### SUBMISSION IS A CHOICE

Submission is a willingness to be under the authority of another. Submission and control are two different things. In Romans 12, Paul reminds us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices. In light of history, that may have meant death. Here's the key, **there is no one in authority that has been placed there except by God.**

### GOD ESTABLISHES ALL AUTHORITY

We have to understand the sovereignty of God. God is the supreme power over all things. If God has appointed every civil ruler and every governing authority, then why should any Christian fear submitting to that which God has appointed?

- **When we understand the sovereignty of God, we know He is over ALL things.**

### AUTHORITY IS FOR OUR GOOD

Government is ordained by God to reward good and punish evil. Paul doesn't answer all our questions, but he does want us to be model citizens. We follow the law unless those laws require us to violate God's law.

- **Sin is a reality in human culture, so laws are put into effect to protect us from the sin of society.**

### WHAT IF THE AUTHORITY IS CORRUPT?

This isn't anything new. People have always been corrupt. We can't live by fear and it's not our job to exact revenge. **We can't break the law and justify our actions!** We have to work hard to restore God's standards to society.

- **We must be responsible citizens as well as responsible Christians, and sometimes the two are in opposition.**

### WE LIVE IN A TENSION

There are times Christians are confronted with decisions to go against authorities. History has seen many rise up against government, but this isn't a license to disobey authority. We have a clear conscience because it's the right thing to do.

- **We don't disobey civil authority for personal reasons.**

### PAY YOUR OBLIGATIONS

We don't really own anything. This isn't the same as us being a slave to the lender. This is supporting those in authority. Since all authority is ordained by God, we are to pay our taxes, support and respect that authority.

- **Paying our obligations honors the Lord. Don't cheat on your taxes. Get a fishing license. Wear your seatbelt. Honor the law.**

## LOVE (ROMANS 13:8-10)

### LOVE IS A DEBT

The only debt you and I should owe to society is love. We love all people because Christ first loved us (Matt. 22; Eph. 5:21). Love opens the door to present the gospel. Paul presents a paradox for believers: Instead of focusing on what we can't do (meeting the demands of the law) we are freed to focus on what we can do (love one another).

### THE COMMANDMENT OF LOVE

Why did Paul reduce the commandments to just a few? He summarizes the commandments just as Jesus did, saying we fulfill the whole law when we love.

- **The gospel is so simple.**
- **The commandment is to love everyone, not just those we look like, act like, or believe as we do (Matt. 5).**

### LOVE FULFILLS THE LAW

We cannot fulfill the law without love. Love is the common denominator in the 2 GC's. Loving others is a decision. It is nearly impossible to commit crime or do harm to those we love.

- **It is only when we're willing to reduce love to an emotion that it becomes possible to hurt another.**

## TIME IS RUNNING OUT (ROMANS 13:11-14)

### WAKE UP

We are to submit to authorities and love others because the time is short. Paul wants us to understand we are up against the clock. This challenge is to remind Christ followers we have a responsibility. It's also a reminder we are not to fix our eyes on government.

- **We need to live as though we're aware Christ's return is imminent.**

## A DAY IS COMING

The *night* Paul refers to is the evil in this world, but the day is coming. That is encouraging as Christ followers, but also challenging. "Come apart and be separate." We must be ready for Christ's return. We have no business messing with darkness (2 Cor. 6).

- **Light and darkness are incompatible. They cannot be in the same place.**

### THIS IS A BATTLE!

Too often we look to everything but Jesus. America, our military, laws, and government figures will never save us! This is a spiritual battle. We are to put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6:11-13). God never called us to a lazy life of Christianity.

- **We fight the good fight everyday because this world is not our home.**

### THROW OFF SIN

Sometimes the battle is within. Paul covers this in so many of his other letters. We have to address the sin in our lives. This is a huge issue! In Hebrews 12 we are reminded to "throw off" the sin that entangles us.

- **To say a genuine 'yes' to follow God is to say a genuine 'no' to anything that is not of God.**

### PUT ON CHRIST

Our first step should always be obedience. First, we identify with Christ by being baptized. We further take on His identity as we become more like him. Paul's expectation is that we are to be sanctified (1 Thess. 4:3). In Romans 12 Paul urged us to be transformed.

- **To put on something is to display it outwardly - that is transformation.**

### FIRST THINGS FIRST

Throughout Romans Paul has presented the case of our desperate need for Jesus. He's virtually left no stone unturned and now he's imploring followers of Jesus to make a difference in others by how they live.

- **Everything we do we must run through the lens of loving others. We cannot love Jesus without loving others.**

## IT IS A QUESTION OF CONTROL

- Have you settled the issue of the sovereignty of God? There is nothing outside His control.
- **IF** we have a relationship with Jesus, we will submit to authority.

## IT'S ALL ABOUT TRUST

- Are we really trusting God if we're so concerned about which party is in office?
- Can we say we trust God if we take matters into our own hands?
- **We obey the law, pray for those in authority, and trust God with the outcome.**

## LOVE IS THE KEY

- **Do we really love God enough to address the sin in our lives?**
- How are we loving our neighbor as ourselves? What impact could we make on those around us if we invested less in this world and more in the next?
- **Walking in righteousness is loving God and loving others.**