

Resting in God's Righteous Authority
Romans 13:1-7 (p. #948 in Pew Bible)

Exegetical Text Flow

Romans 13:1a—BIG IDEA (or Thesis):
Every Christian must show biblical submission to their government authorities.

Why must Christians show biblical submission to their government authorities?

13:1b-2 Reason #1:

God has sovereignly raised up each human government official and has instituted them with the authority to bring righteous judgment on those who resist them.

13:3-4 Reason #2:

Earthly authorities are God's appointed servants and instruments to carry out His righteous and sovereign plan for His creation according to His divine will. They are God's divinely appointed approvers of good and avengers of wrong.

13:5 Restatement of BIG IDEA (or Thesis):

Christians must show biblical submission to their government authorities to both (1) avoid righteous punishment at their hands and (2) to have a clean conscience before God.

13:6-7 Practical Application of the BIG IDEA (or Thesis):

Because your government authorities are God's ministers, you have submissively paid your required taxes. Submissively give to each government authority and agency the taxes, revenue, respect, and honor that they are owed.

Scriptural Examples and Considerations

- In Romans 13:1-7, Paul is presenting the ideal relationship between Christians and their divinely appointed government authorities. However, this is not always the case in all situations.
- Consider well the context of this passage: Romans 12:18!
- The Example of Jesus Christ (*Matthew 17:24-27; 22:17-22; John 18-19; 1 Timothy 6:12-16*)
- The Example of Paul (*Acts 9-28; Prison Epistles; 2 Timothy 1:5-12; 4:6-8*)
- The Example of Peter & the Other Apostles (*Acts 4:18-21; 5:27-33*)
- The Example of the John at Patmos (*Revelation 1:9*)
- The Examples of Old Testament Saints (*Daniel 1-6*)

Implications

- Christians should have a desire to submit to the government authorities that God has raised up over them.
- However, Christians must always choose to graciously and boldly "obey God rather than men" (*Acts 5:29*) when human authorities make unbiblical demands of them.
- Christians should prayerfully seek God's Word and His wisdom as they pray for their government leaders (*1 Timothy 2:1-6*) and seek to live in accordance to God's Word before them and under their authority (*Titus 3:1-8*).
- **What is your current heart posture and mindset towards the government authorities that God has sovereignly raised up over you? Are you resting in God's righteous authority over all?**