

ROMANS 13

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established."

MUST EVERYONE ALWAYS SUBMIT TO THE GOVERNING OR RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES?

By George Lujack

There are many sheepish persons in the world who often criticize the bold, critical-thinking, and discerning who question authority, saying to them that they must always obey the government authorities and their church leaders, and cite Romans 13:1 as the basis for this worldview. This article will examine the whole of Romans 13 and will declare that the notion to always obey authority is not of God or of Scripture.

ROMANS 13:1-2:

Everyone is to obey the governing authorities, because there is no authority except from God and so whatever authorities exist have been appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

Romans 13:1, if read alone and out of the context of the rest of Romans 13, would seem to indicate that whoever is in government power is appointed and ordained by God and must be obeyed without question. As with all Scripture, verses read alone and out of context - without supporting verses, should not be used to create a doctrine or a worldview.

ROMANS 13:3-4:

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

The Apostle Paul is speaking of good, righteous rulers. Evil rulers *are* a terror to good citizens and to the good works of good citizens. Good, righteous rulers are God's ministers who will punish evil citizens.

ROMANS 13:5-7:

Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Citizens are subject to good and evil rulers and must pay taxes to both.

1 PETER 2:13-17:

Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men - as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

The Apostle Peter wrote that we should obey every ordinance of man, kings, and governors. But the ordinances he spoke of were NOT ordinances of evil, they were ordinances issued by righteous rulers who punish evildoers and praise those who do good deeds.

ACTS 5:27-32:

And the high priest asked them, saying, "DID WE NOT STRICTLY COMMAND YOU NOT TO TEACH IN THIS NAME? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"
But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "WE OUGHT TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN. The God of our fathers raised up Yeshua (Jesus) whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Peter and the other apostles with him were sent to the common prison by the religious governing authorities of Jerusalem (Acts 5:17). They were commanded by these rulers NOT to teach in the name of Yeshua (Jesus). Peter ignored an ordinance of men that was in direct conflict with the ordinance given to Him by God, and boldly declared to the high priest who had them arrested, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

ACTS 5:40-42:

And when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Yeshua (Jesus), and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Yeshua as the Messiah (Jesus as the Christ).

Once again the apostles were taken, beaten, and commanded that they should not speak in the name of Yeshua (Jesus), and again the apostles ignored the ordinance of the religious rulers and continually declared Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus the Christ).

2 SAMUEL 23:3:

The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me: "He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

PSALM 2:10-11:

Now therefore be wise, O kings; be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve YHWH (the Lord) with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

If the governing authorities are lawfully compliant with God's laws, are just, wise, ruling in the fear of God, we are to obey them, but if not, then we are to rebel against them and obey God rather than men.

EVIL LEADERS – WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM?

Historically, people have tried to assassinate evil world leaders. Estimates vary, but there were a reported thirty-five failed assassination attempts of Adolph Hitler. Should the righteous attempt to kill the evil rulers of the world?

JEREMIAH 51:19-20:

YHWH (the Lord) of hosts is His name.

“You are My battle-ax and weapons of war: for with you I will break the nation in pieces; with you I will destroy kingdoms.”

PROVERBS 21:1:

The king's heart is in the hand of YHWH (the Lord), like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

It is not for the individual to take down a king. Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall by the decree of God. God raises other kingdoms to take down evil kings. Sometimes God raises the people of a nation to take down its own leader. The fate of the lone assassin is usually not a good one. Even if an assassination of an evil ruler is successful, often the evil ruler will be glorified as a martyr and the assassin will be killed and vilified.

DAVID FLEES KING SAUL

David fled the presence of God's appointed king of Israel, Saul. Saul sought to kill David, as he grew jealous of David's popularity with the people of Israel. Rather than confront Saul, David fled Israel and honored God's appointed king of Israel, rather than seeking to kill him and take over his throne, or to prevent Saul from first killing him.

RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES - TEST THE CHURCH FATHERS

ACTS 17:11:

They received the word with all readiness, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY TO FIND OUT WHETHER THESE THINGS WERE SO.

GALATIANS 1:6-9:

I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of MESSIAH (Christ), to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Messiah (Christ). BUT EVEN IF WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL TO YOU THAN WHAT WE HAVE PREACHED TO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED. AS WE HAVE SAID BEFORE, SO NOW I SAY AGAIN, IF ANYONE PREACHES ANY OTHER GOSPEL TO YOU THAN WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:21:

Test all things; hold fast what is good.

Many Catholics and other denominational-minded believers, rely on the teachings of their church ‘fathers,’ their traditional doctrinal teachings, or the understandings of their local congregational minister.

False shepherds unfortunately mislead many people. Far too few lions are bold enough to just search the Scriptures daily to verify whether or not what they hear, or have heard, in their teachings is true or not.

The ultimate religious authority on Earth is not any figure, not any man, not any church, but the authority of the word of God as written in the Holy Scriptures. Wise men have historically searched the Scriptures to verify the religious preaching of men, to find out whether the things they say are true. Wise men still do.

THE COMING ANTICHRIST SATANIC GOVERNING AUTHORITY

REVELATION 13:16-17:

He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

As the end of the age is soon approaching, the Antichrist will arise out of the world economic collapse and great tribulation, and his satanic government will be the governing authority. He will command everyone in the world to take his mark.

REVELATION 14:9-11:

“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

REVELATION 20:4:

Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Left behind repentant believers in the Sovereign of sovereigns, the King of kings, Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus the Christ) are commanded from the highest governing authority - the kingdom of God, to not accept the Antichrist’s implant mark, even to the point of being beheaded, rather than submitting to the Antichrist satanic governing authority.