

Title: A Christian Citizen

Text: Romans 13:1-5

We are in the book of Romans chapter 13. We have been looking at the (4A) APPLICATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS. (1B) And the first area concerns our Christian duties. There is a song that goes: IF YOU ARE SAVED AND YOU KNOW IT, THEN YOUR LIFE OUGHT TO SHOW IT. So, we are studying those duties that are part of the believers life. (1C) Our first duty involved our commitment to God. (2C) Our second duty involved our ministry with others in the use of our spiritual gifts. (3C) Our third duty involved an application of real love.

(4C) Now, today, we want to come to our fourth duty. And this involves our responsibility to authority. The Christians responsibility to governing authority. Up to this point, we have been talking about the milk of the gospel. Today, we are going to look at the meat of the gospel.

(Read Romans 13:1-5)

Prayer

(4C) O.K. OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERNING AUTHORITY. (1D) And the area that I want you to see, today, is our subjection to governing authority. That is the theme of verses 1 thru 5. And that is all that I want you to get ahold of this morning. OUR SUBJECTION TO GOVERNING AUTHORITY. And there are three principles that I want you to see in these first five verses.

(1E) Number one, Vs 1, we have a basic duty to subject ourselves. There is a basic requirement, here, to submit ourselves. Over and over again, the Bible tells Christians to be in subjection. It doesn't matter who is in authority. It doesn't matter whether they are believers or non-believers. It doesn't matter how they are performing as to whether or not we think they deserve the honor we give them by our subjection. That is not the point at all. The Bible teaches that when a Christian is operating under the control of the Holy Spirit, he will submit himself to authority.

Now, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE IN SUBJECTION? The Roman people knew much about this topic. And if you can sort off picture what the Romans thought, and then understand that this letter was written to the believers in the imperial city of Rome, I think it will help you to understand what a tremendous conflict was going on in their midst.

You see, a Roman citizen did not want to be subject to anyone. To subject oneself was a sign of weakness. Roman citizens were very proud. They were stubborn, and very self-willed. They believed that they had conquered the world, ^{therefore} and could control the world.

And so Paul is writing this letter of Romans to a hand full of Christians living under a totalitarian government and he tells them to be subject to the governing authorities. That same government that actually hated Christians.

Now, why did Rome hate Christians so much? You have all heard of the Roman persecutions? In these persecutions they tried to wipe out the Christians from the face of the earth. And as you know, they did not accomplish that goal. We are all here. Right? But they tried.

Now, what was wrong? Why did Rome hate the Christians? You must remember that Rome being a polytheist society in accepting all gods, still had a string attached to this concept. And that is that each individual citizen would declare, no matter what God they worshiped, they would declare that Caesar was absolute Lord.

And so the Christians came along and said, "**No way. Jesus is Lord.**" And with that began a tremendous conflict and persecution.

And it really did delight the Romans to see the Christians in the arena. It delighted them because it was getting back at them for the attitudes they had. Those humble, submissive Christians. Now, let's see what they will do when they are faced with death. And the Romans with some sort of sick joy watched it all. But in their hearts they were a sick people. They were sick because they did not know the meaning of subjection.

And so Paul is writing to those believers in the city of Rome. People who were programmed and trained by their society not to be in subjection to anyone. Paul wrote to them to be in subjection to the governing authorities.

And God is telling us, in this day and age, to be subject to anything and everything that is in authority over us. The word "**to be subject**" is simple the military term that the Romans used. If the Centurian said to his 100 mean "**DO THIS**", they had no right to question him. Even though they thought it was dumb or stupid. They had no right to question him. That Roman Centurian demanded absolute obedience. And you faced death if you refused to submit.

and And that little word is brought over into our Christian vocabulary. And we are told to be subject. Children are to be subject to their parents. Parents are to be subject unto God. Wives and husbands are to be in subjection to each other. Employees are to be subject to their employers. All the way through the N.T., Christians are told to be in subjection *to governing authorities*

with Now, I want to confess something, which I think you will agree **DO YOU KNOW I AM PROGRAMED TO DO THE OPPOSITE?** I don't want to be subjected to anything or anyone. Is that true with you? *sure it is!*

Listen, dear friends, we all believe that we can run our own life. We all believe we can take care of ourselves. You see, our old sin nature is bent against subjection. We don't want to be subject to anything or anyone.

One of the problems in our society *Today* is that we have lost the conviction of authority. We are so concerned with the **NOW...DOING MY THING NOW.** And that conviction is far greater than whether or not the thing that I am ask to do is right or wrong.

You see, dear friends, part of our problem is that we look at people who are over us...for example...a boss, or, a teacher...and we say, **"He is not so great."** Or, you work for a boss who is not a Christian. He hates Christ and the Gospel. And he doesn't like you because you go to church. And you conclude, **"Hay, I don't have to be in subjection to him."**

Yet, the Bible still says **"be subject unto your employer.** And least you think it is only referring to believers, the Bible even gives us a non-believer as an example and tells us that we are still to be in subjection.

Now, whether it is the government, or your employer, or your parents, the Bible says to be subject. Whether they are worthy or not. Be subject unto them. Be submissive.

I find that this is a basic problem in our whole Christian life. We are not submitting ourselves one to another in the fear of God. We are not, therefore, able to be effective in our Christian life. And I would like to show you why. This chapter is talking about more, dear friends, than just being in subjection to government. It deals with the whole issue of subjection which is in the heart of everyone of us. And ^{Paul} ~~we are going to~~ deal, in great depth with this issue in this chapter.

Summary

So, let's move on. First, we looked at the basic responsibility. Paul says **"be subject."**

(2E) Secondly, in Vs 1 and 2, Paul deals with the recognition of their authority. The recognition of authority for those who have it. And I would like you to notice three things about that authority. Three things in recognition of authority to those who have it.

(14) Number one, the cause behind all authority is God. The cause behind all authority is God. The Bible says in Vs 1, "For there is no authority except from God." Do you know that there has never been an authority established in your life that God hasn't wanted to be there? He is behind all authority. God is the ultimate cause behind the authorities that exist in the world.

(24) Now, the second thing is very important. According to Vs 1 the control of all authroity is in the hands of God. Vs 1 says "and those which exist," that is the authorities that exist "are established by God."

The word "establish" means to "^{ordain}~~ordain~~ or govern." These authorities are not establishing themselves. They are not simply winning elections. Oh, no, according to the Bible, God has established, whoever is in authority, to be there. He is controlling the whole thing (incl. elections) ~~governing it.~~

You look at some governments and you might say, "Well, he isn't doing a very good job." But, friends, God has reasons why certain people are in authority. A young person said to me once ~~was~~ ^{was a} was sharing on authority. He said "if you had my Dad you would ~~rebell~~ ^{rebell} to." And you know, knowing his Dad, I know what he means.....really.....But we have no right to rebell. Because God has established that authroity in our life. And we are to submit regardless of what the Dad is like.

That is a strange teaching to a heart that is prone to love itself. You see, our problem is really within ourselves. It is not with the authroity. It is being in subjection to that authroity that is my problem.

So, the control of all authority is established by God. Did you know that the Bible says that whatever king has ever ruled God knew the time he would be set up, how long he would rule, and when he would end his reign? And God knew this before he ever reigned. God has always known that. The Bible teaches that God is in control.

You see, that is one thing we christians believe about God. He hasn't wound up the world and then sat back to watch it wind down...No....He is in absolute controle.

You say, "Well, what about ungodly rulers?" Well, God even took the wrath of Pharaoh to praise his name, says the Bible. He can take the sins of a man and turn it ^{around} ~~out~~ for his glory and honor. God is in control. He knows what he is doing. *We have no right to question God*

As a matter of fact, much of what we see happening in the world that we think is so bad, listen, God is in control of that.

That should bring hope and encouragement to the Christian. Do you know why? Because this whole thing that is coming together into one ~~world~~ world ~~wide~~ wide government is just what the Bible predicts. It is just what God wants. Jesus is coming. We are not afraid of it. ~~NOT~~ afraid at all. ^{why? because} God is in absolute control.

Now, let's get it down where it hurts. God wants you to have that boss that you have. You need it. Did you know that? You need the boss that you have. You really do. Some of you, this will not bother. But others will go out of here feeling bad. You are going to be upset knowing the kind of boss you have. That Pastor must be crazy. Did you hear what he said from the pulpit? God has established authority in your life because He knows what you need. No matter who it is, or whatever he does.

(3rd) Now, there is a third thing that is said here that is very important.

Concerning the recognition of authority in the world. And that is the consequences of resisting that authority. Vs 2 says "Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves."

Now, friends, I am going to give you an interpretation of Vs 2 which I feel is correct. But which is not often held. Most people believe that Vs 2 is talking about eternal judgment. That is if you continue as a habit of life resisting authority you demonstrate that as a believe, eventually God is going to judge you. But I don't believe that is what that vs says. It says that you will receive upon yourself condemnation or judgement.

And I believe ~~God~~ ^{Paul} is talking about your life, right now. Not only because I believe that is what the Word teaches. But, also, because I see it in real experience.

When you as an individual do not respond to authority, do you know what happens? You receive the judgment in your own life by people not responding to you. That is what I believe this verse is saying.

And I see this happening all the time. For example there ^{was} is a young gal who was not responsive to her parants. In fact she was quite rebellious. She said that she did like her parants. She resisted many of the things that her parants ask her to do. And I remember this because she was going to get married and she came in for pre-marrial counseling. And one of her fundamental problems was still in her heart. And that is she had been rebelling against her parants. And she said, "Pastor, I am going to be a better parant than my mother and Dad ever were."

OH, what inmature dreams do we have.....I am going to be a tremendous parant, she said. I already know some of things that I am going to do that my parants never did. And I am going to avoid some of those things they did!

"Oh,,, are you," I said. That is interesting...I said, "Did you know that you will probable follow the same pattern . Did you know that your children are going to rebell against you in just the same manner that you have rebelled against your parants?".... *Go To Mom and Dad and Ask Them to Forgive You For Your Rebellion activities.*

SOFTLY It is really funny. We try to escape this. But you cannot escape it. You cannot hide from God. You cannot run away from God. And if you are not responsive to those that are in authroity over you, one day in your life you are going to discover that those under you are not responding to your authority. *Christian Parents* I ask you. ARE YOU SUBJECTED TO GOD? If you are not, then don't expect subjection out off ^{of them} your kids...

Kids, are you subjected to your parants? I warn you that one day when you are a parant, your kids will not be subjected to you.

We will receive in this life judgement for our failure to submit unto authority. If there was ever a day when the nation in which we live, ~~is~~ needs this message, it is now.

SOFTLY We ought to stop playing around. We are paying the consequences. If you sow to the wind, you are going to ripe a worldwind. You cannot run away from it. You cannot engore authroity in your life. (I Jhn 1:9)

(3B) I would like you to notice, in the third place, in regards to subjection to authority, the reasons for their authority. What are reasons does God give AS to why these governmental leaders have this authority? And there are just ^{the} simple reasons in verse 3-4-5.

(1F) Number one, the protection of those who are doing good. God has placed people in authority to protect those who ~~are~~ ^{are} doing good.

In the content, doing good is submitting, it is subjecting ourselves to the authority. And if we don't, we have to pay the consequence.

The end of verse 3 says "Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same."

(2F) Now, the second reason is an obvious reason. And that is punishment for those who are doing evil. That is a reason why God has placed ~~men~~ ^{people} in authority. Punishment for those who are doing evil or wrong.

Now, many people today are fighting over this issue of capital punishment. I don't want to discuss the issue in another terms than the scripture. For those who say, "WELL, that was the O.T. that said, "who so shedth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." And others say that there is no N.T. reference to capital punishment. It is never taught in the N.T.

Well, if you believe that you need to read Romans 13:4. It says, "for it is a minister of God to you for good. But ~~if~~ you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon ~~the~~ one who practices evil."

Now, friends, ~~Paul~~ ^{Paul} is not talking about laying a sword on someones shoulder and making them a knight.....Oh, no, he is talking about "chop" off with the head. That is what he is talking about...

Capital punishment is taught in the N.T. Now, what you do with that is another mattter. And I leave that with your individaul conscieneousness. With your private priesthood of every believer. But the Bible teaches captital punishment. What you do with that is very important.

Now, look at the point in Vs 5. This is speaking to believers. "Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

I found that very interesting. You see, it is not only because I might get caught, and have to pay the consequences, but God is saying because you have to live with yourself...How true that is in life. If we believe we can get away with something, then we do it. As long as we don't get caught, then it is all right. But Paul is saying, "Hay! that doesn't holed water, you are going to have to live with yourself. You have to live with your own conscience."

So, we need to be subject not simply for wrath, and that is reason enough. Who wants to get their head chopped off. But, also, we need to be subject for conscience sake.

Did you know that your subjection to anyone in authority, whether it is in business or government or in the family or in church, no matter what it is, do you know that that is related to the spiritual effectiveness of the testimony that you bear? Did you know that? It is true.

The book of Titus chapter 2 tells us that no Christian shall have an effective witness who is disobedient in this area. Unless we are subject to powers and authority over us, whether they be family, business, or government, we will not be effective in our Christian witness. That is very important. It is a very serious matter. And I pray that you will listen to the Word of God.

Yes, By Your Love

BUT HOW WILL PEOPLE KNOW THAT WE ARE CHRISTIANS? ~~One of the great ways is when they see you, in humility, subject yourself to governing authorities... authority~~ *How* *There in* *By Subject Submitting*

Shall we close in prayer

Of course the Motivation for submission is Jesus.