

NO OTHER NAME
The Five-Fold Teaching — Submission, Part 2
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Governing Authorities and the Christian Citizen

Romans 13:1 Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. **2** Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. **3** For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. **4** For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. **5** Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. **6** This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. **7** Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

The reciprocal responsibilities outlined here come under the heading of "Justice"—to give each one his due (v. 7). We owe to the governing authorities to "do what is right" (v. 3) and to not be rebellious law breakers.

The authority of the magistrate is delegated from God who instituted government to regulate society for the common good.

The governing authorities stand under the oversight and judgment of God to do two things: A) commend the doer of good; and B) restrain and punish (v. 4) the doer of evil.

The Christian is a good citizen for his/her conscience sake and not just because he/she is fearful of punishment.

The boundary set by God on obedience to governing authorities is that we are to obey "God rather than man" when coerced to do something that is ungodly.

Acts 5:28 "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." **29** Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"

Parents and Children

Colossians 3:20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— **3** "so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth." (Deut 5:16) **4** Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Obey...this pleases the Lord (v. 3:20): We can see here the general principle that the Lord is pleased when Christians submit to the authority systems and structures that He has ordained. Contrary to popular opinion, God is not pleased with everything His children do. It is better to

think of God (and the Lord) as “old school” parents that are not interested in enabling our bad behavior. Rather, He rewards and fosters our growth into mature disciples.

Proverbs 13:24 *Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.*

Hebrews 12:8-9 and 11 *If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! 11 ...it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*

Harvest of righteousness and peace (v.11): We learn from Proverbs and Hebrews that loving parents give careful discipline to their children in order to produce good in their lives. What is in mind is thoughtful correction that may seem painful but has the intention of producing godliness.

Fathers: Since the Christian home is to be headed by the father, it becomes his responsibility to set the boundaries for and provide the discipline for children in order to grow them into godly individuals.

Fathers, do not embitter... exasperate (Col 3:21 & Eph 6:4): To exasperate in the original means to provoke to anger and is probably what Paul has in mind in both passages. Paul realizes that children are going to transfer their feelings, thoughts, and experiences with their earthly father on to the Heavenly Father. This is why Christian fathers are to wisely discipline and care for their children, avoiding being too harsh.

Children...obey...honor: Paul notes that obedience to one’s parents which later becomes respect (Heb 12:9) and honor, is blessed by God. This is a primary form of justice (righteousness) in Scripture. Parental honor is second only to the honor we owe to God. Therefore, humans owe due justice to their parents.

1Timothy 5:3-4 and 8 *Honor widows who are really widows. 4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God... 8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Societies that foster respect for parents, elders and ancestors tend to flourish while societies that foster disrespect and rebellion against them tend to disintegrate.

Training and Instruction (v. 4): Paul’s concept here is that Christian parents are responsible for A) giving verbal instruction and B) coaching in how to live a Christian life. Christian parents are to positively set forward what is to be done. They don’t just let them make their own religious and moral decisions.

Submission in the Marketplace

Colossians 3:22 *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you*

will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. 25 Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism.

Colossians 4:1 *Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.*

You will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward (v. 24): Again, we learn that God rewards those who submit to His established lines of authority. In the marketplace, Christians work for the Lord and, therefore, exceed worldly expectations.

Repaid for their wrongs (v. 25): Paul warns Christians that our bad workmanship will be disciplined by God. He shows no “favoritism”—meaning that He does not give Christians a “free pass” from their sloppy efforts at work.