

Romans 13:1-7

Submission to Government, Service to Christ

Recap

- **Romans 1-11**

- **Neither Jews nor Gentiles can save themselves through works**
- **The Jews have the Law, but they are no more worthy than the Gentiles**
 - **“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)**
- **The Law is a mirror to show us our need for a Savior**
- **Christ’s sacrifice on the cross paid for all our sins, once and for all time**
- **God is still faithful to His promise to create a great nation from Abraham and his descendants**
 - **“Reconciliation of the world” (Romans 11:15)**

- **Romans 12**

- **Sacrifice your old self and take on the new self in Christ**
- **Be humbly self-aware; not prideful but confident in the gifts from God’s grace**
- **Use the gifts of the Spirit as you’ve received them to unify the body of Christ**
- **Let genuine love and peaceful living be your trademark**
- **Repay evil with good and leave vengeance to God**

Romans 13: 1-3

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. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 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.

Romans 13: 4-7

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. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 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.

1 Peter 2:11-15

Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

1 Peter 2:15-17

For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

1 Timothy 2:1-4

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Jeremiah 29:4-7

This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

“Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

But what if government is wrong?

- **Romans 12:14, 17-21**
- **Matthew 5:38-48**
- **1 Peter 2:18-23**

Jesus Submitted to Authority

- **Matthew 20:20-28**
- **Matthew 26:50**
- **Isaiah 53:7**

Submission vs. Obedience

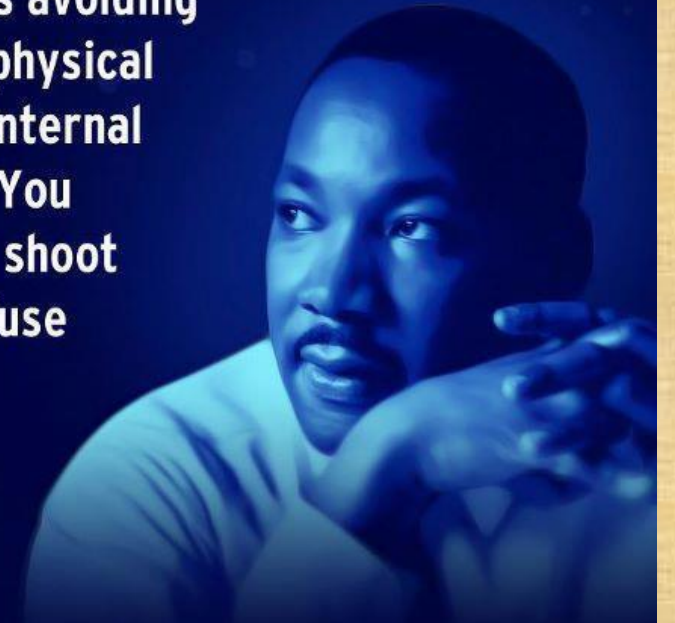
- **Micah 6:8**
- **Acts 5:29**

MLK Jr.'s Nonviolence

“Nonviolent resistance...is a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING

Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him.



Six Key Principles

- **One can resist evil without resorting to violence.**
- **Nonviolence seeks to win the “friendship and understanding” of the opponent, not to humiliate him**
- **Evil itself, not the people committing evil acts, should be opposed**
- **Those committed to nonviolence must be willing to suffer without retaliation as suffering itself can be redemptive**

Six Key Principles

- **The resister should be motivated by love in the sense of the Greek word *agape*, which means “understanding,” or “redeeming good will for all men”**
- **The nonviolent resister must have a “deep faith in the future,” stemming from the conviction that “The universe is on the side of justice”**

King's Commitment

“Occasionally in life one develops a conviction so precious and meaningful that he will stand on it till the end. This is what I have found in nonviolence.”

“We maintained the hope while transforming the hate of traditional revolutions into positive nonviolent power. As long as the hope was fulfilled there was little questioning of nonviolence. But when the hopes were blasted, when people came to see that in spite of progress their conditions were still insufferable ... despair began to set in.”

King's Commitment

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that. The beauty of nonviolence is that in its own way and in its own time it seeks to break the chain reaction of evil.”

Overcome evil with good

- **Submission and obedience “rebooted” the Roman Empire**
- **Modern concepts of human dignity originated with Christianity**
- **Even movements that embrace atheism unconsciously employ Christian concepts to promote their causes**

“Critiques and condemnations of rape, slavery, murder, war, wealth, ‘toxic masculinity,’ and excessive religiosity itself draw on Christian conceptions about human dignity...I find something reassuring about all of this. So much of our political and religious discourse and discord strikes me as a kind of tyranny of small differences. I don’t mean theologically; obviously, the differences between believers and unbelievers are hugely significant, and I have zero desire to downplay them or even debate them. But the fact that even those eager to dismantle the moral cathedral of Christianity are using tools of Christian design to do it seems like a good hedge against the damage they can do. The moral frameworks with which many want to replace openly Christian ones are still very, very, Christian. Not all of them...but most of them. And that’s good news, even if it’s not quite *the Good News.*” ~ Jonah Goldberg, *The Dispatch*

God's people in government

- **Joseph and Daniel served in pagan regimes and submitted to the authority of the king, but obeyed God**
- **William Wilberforce (1759-1833) was a gifted politician who converted to Christianity, questioned his vocation, but ultimately devoted his political career to the abolition of the slave trade in the UK and slavery itself**
 - **"It is hoped and believed that the Lord has raised you up for the good of His church and for the good of the nation." ~ *John Newton, former slaver and author of "Amazing Grace"***

Takeaways

- **Christian submission to authority means showing honor and respect to rulers**
 - **Comply with the law**
 - **Live a life commendable to outsiders (Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:12; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:7; 1 Corinthians 10:32-33)**
- **Obey God and peacefully accept the consequences of doing good**
 - **1 Peter 2:19-21**
 - **John 15:18–20**
- **Trust God with the outcome**
 - **Romans 8:28**

John 19:11

Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

Proverbs 21:1

The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.