



NT 2732 The Book of Romans

Chapters 9 – 16

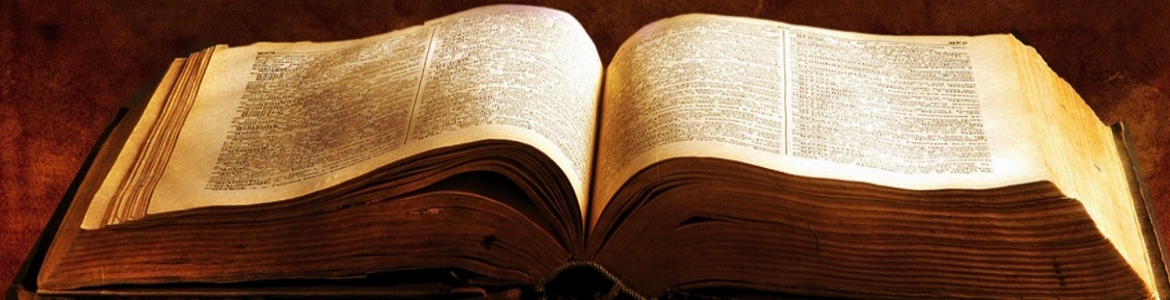


MID-AMERICA
SEMINARY • COLLEGE

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A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF
ROMANS

CHAPTER 13A



This week...

Chapter 13a:

Be Subject to Government



ROMANS

THE GOSPEL

Introduction — Personal (1:1–17)	THE GOSPEL						Conclusion — Relational (15:14–16:27)
	Saving the Sinner		Concerning Israel		Concerning Christian Conduct		
	Depravity of humanity		Divine sovereignty and human will		Social		
	Grace of God		Past, present, and future		Civil		
	Justification by faith		of the nation		Personal		
	Sanctification through the Spirit						
	Security of the saint						
	CHAPTERS		CHAPTERS		CHAPTERS		
	1:18–8:39		9–11		12:1–15:13		
	sis	Doctrinal		National		Practical	
se	Faith		Hope		Love		
od	Wrath		Righteousness		Glory		
					Grace		
of ity	Fallen		Dead		Struggling		
			Saved		Freed		
Sin	Exposed		Conquered		Explained		
pe	Dead in sin		Dead to sin		Peace with God		
ne					Love for others		
es	God's righteousness is given to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.						
	1:16–17						
ns	Jesus is the focus of the gospel and the means of salvation by God's grace apart from works (1:1–4, 16–17).						

Chapter 13

Verse 1- *Every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*

God has created three institutions: the family, the government, and the church.

- The family- Genesis 2:24
- The government- Genesis 9:6, Romans 13
- The church- Acts 2, Ephesians 2:20

Chapter 13

Verse 1- *Every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*

What about the American Revolution?

The Founders clearly believed that they were not in rebellion against God's ordained institution of civil government; they were only resisting tyranny and not the institution itself (Barton).

They believed that God would not honor an offensive war but that He did permit civil self-defense (e.g., Nehemiah 4:13-14 & 20-21, Zechariah 9:8, 2 Samuel 10:12, etc.).

Chapter 13

Verse 1- *Every person is to be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*

Paul is clear about the nature of authority. We are to submit to governing (*hyperechousais*- *huper*- above + *echo*- to hold oneself) authorities because they are subject to God's authority.

Since God is the ultimate authority, we should obey God if human government commands us to do what God forbids.

OT- Daniel 3:12- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to bow down to an idol.

NT- Acts 5:29- *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.* (When commanded to stop preaching)

Chapter 13

Verse 2- *Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

Paul is clear in stating that God is the ultimate authority and that He ultimately directs those in leadership. When Jesus stood before Pilate, he reminded him that he would have no power at all if it had not been given to him from above (John 19:11).

Living in a secular society means doing what is right and working within the limits of the law to live and promote change. We cannot use our faith as an excuse for lawlessness.

Chapter 13

Verse 2- *Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

Even though we may not agree with a law, we must submit unless it directly violates clear teaching of Scripture, otherwise, we bring condemnation (judgment) on ourselves.

“It is plain from the immediate context, as from the general context of the apostolic writings, that the state can rightly command obedience only within the limits of the purposes for which it has been divinely instituted—in particular, the state not only may but must be resisted when it demands the allegiance due to God alone.” (F.F. Bruce)

Chapter 13

Verse 3- *For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;*

Avoiding punishment is a legitimate motivation for submitting to authority, but a higher motivation is a clear conscience. To fear God but to live the life of a rebel is a contradiction. Usually, if we obey the law, we will be free from legal problems or punishments (“have praise from the same.”)

God provides government to prevent anarchy. To rebel against it (in general) creates more anarchy and disorder.

Chapter 13

Verse 4- *for it is a servant 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 servant of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.*

Those who disobey the government have reason to be afraid. Rulers, even though they may not see themselves as such, serves as agents of God to punish those who do wrong (“he does not bear the sword for nothing.”) The sword is a symbol of the power and force used for law and order.

Chapter 13

Verse 5- *Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for the sake of conscience.*

We should obey the government because it keeps us out of trouble, and it is the right (moral) thing to do.

Christians must pay their taxes, obey the speed limit, buy fishing and hunting licenses, wear their seat belts, etc., and do them all in both the letter and spirit of the law. A conscience is not an infallible guide, as Paul said—"My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent" (1 Cor. 4:4)-but it is a place to start (Boa).

Chapter 13

Verse 6- *For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.*

From a Western worldview (especially American), this is difficult. Our country was born out of a tax rebellion, and we live in a representative republic that uses democratic principles. We have rejected the idea of a monarch for almost 250 years.

Collecting taxes is necessary for the maintenance of conditions that make normal living possible, and “God’s ministers” (*leitourgos*- doing on behalf of others, not *diakonos*) collect them.

Chapter 13

Verse 6- *For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.*

Some Bible scholars suggest that paying taxes among the early Christians was due to the teaching of Jesus found in Mark 12:13-17 and that Paul was indirectly quoting Jesus here:

*Are we to pay, or not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at." And they brought one. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's." And Jesus said to them, "**Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.**" And they were utterly amazed at Him.*

Chapter 13

Verse 7- *Pay to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; respect to whom respect; honor to whom honor.*

Paul writes about the specific obligation to pay taxes and a broader obligation to pay what is owed, monetary or not. Even if we cannot respect or honor people personally in positions of authority, we should respect and honor their position or office.

It's interesting that those who were even martyred (or crucified) because of government officials didn't curse and degrade those killing them. They focused on Christ.

Chapter 13

Verse 8- *Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for the one who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Law.*

Borrowing and lending were permitted under Jewish law (Lev. 25-35-36). The emphasis here is that if you do borrow, you must pay it back, and if you do lend, you must not abuse the borrower (usuary or charging interest was forbidden). Debts were forgiven every seven years (Deut. 15:1-2).

An example today would be a title loan, borrowing money against the title of your vehicle. This type of loan charges 25% per month or 300% per year. No credit check is needed.

Chapter 13

Verse 8- *Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for the one who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Law.*

Paul reminds us what Jesus said are the two greatest commandments, to love (*agape*) God and our neighbors (Mark 12:29-31 quoting Leviticus 19:18).

Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Chapter 13

Verse 9- *For this, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

By way of example, Paul gives four of the ten commandments (not in order- #7, #6, #8, and #10) to show that “love” fulfills the Mosaic law, which we cannot do in our own power.

Jesus’ parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) shows us that our “neighbor” is anyone we encounter in life who needs our help.

Chapter 13

Verse 10- *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the Law.*

Paul instructs his readers that believers are called to keep on loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. If we could do this perfectly (we can't), we would also keep the law perfectly (we can't), so we must rely on the power of Christ to do His will.

Chapter 13

Verse 11- *Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed.*

Daytime was a time to work because there was very little in Paul's day to light the darkness (no artificial light). Work began at sunrise.

Paul here is referring more to the quality of time than the actual time of day. Jesus can return at any moment, so let's wake up from spiritual sleep and inactivity and get busy serving the Lord. Every day brings us closer to the return of the Lord.

Chapter 13

Verse 12- *The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let's rid ourselves of the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.*

The day of the Lord draws closer every day. Although we are in darkness of the world, dawn is coming soon!

We are new creatures, not of the darkness but now in the light. It's time for a change of wardrobe- drop "deeds of darkness" and take hold of the "armor of light." Our deeds should be the type that people do in the light of day, not the cover of darkness.

Chapter 13

Verse 13- *Let's behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and debauchery, not in strife and jealousy.*

Paul gets specific about “deeds of darkness.” What should daytime people no longer do? Reckless partying fueled by sex and alcohol is the focus of those seeking personal pleasure above the good of others. Quarreling and jealousy are both about the need to serve ourselves first and best.

These are nighttime lifestyles, Paul writes, but the sun is coming up. Christians need to act in a different way.

Chapter 13

Verse 14- *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*

The way to live a pure life is to clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. “put on,” Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10) and take off “deeds of darkness.” We are “clothed with Christ” (Gal. 3:27) as we are baptized into Him.

We are to make “no provision” (*pronoian*- forethought) for our flesh in lusts. Here’s the secret- thinking (forethought) turns into action. Get ahead of thinking, and you will stop the action.

Next week...

Chapter 14:

Principles of Conscience

