

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Romans 13

Romans 13 - posted by dougkristen (), on: 2004/10/14 10:04

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

What does this scripture mean and how do we apply this as Christians?

Question: Does this mean that we as Christians are to submit even to a "tyrant" like Hitler or Stalin or ??

Grace,
Doug

Re: Romans 13 - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/10/14 13:27

Hi Doug

The classical apologetic for this question is the theory of 'ultra vires' ie beyond their power. It declares that the power of the 'prince' is not absolute and that if he exercises authority beyond what he has been given he may be disobeyed.

In 1528 Tyndale wrote a book on the Obedience of the Christian Man which originally gave him great favour in the eyes of Henry VIII.

The outworking of the principle is that if we do disobey the prince because the commandment of God is greater we ought then to be prepared to suffer the prince's punishment. Consequently if my 'prince' forbids me to preach the gospel I do not sin by disobeying him, but I ought to submit to his punishment.

The apostles clearly limited the power of the authorities in their thinking; And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in his name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. (Act 5:27-29 KJV) but then submitted themselves to the judgment of the council; And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. (Act 5:40-41 KJV)

although later Paul clearly gave due honour to the person of the High Priest; And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. (Act 23:4-5 KJV)

This was actually behind Luther's actions against the Anabaptists. He believed that their behaviour, rather than their beliefs, was causing public disorder and should be punished. He then invoked the civil authority against them which resulted in their execution.

Re: Romans 13 - posted by rookie (), on: 2004/10/14 15:24

Romans 13:3, "...do that which is good..."

How do we know the difference between good and evil?

"For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to **discern both good and evil.**" Hebrews 5:13-14

The book of Daniel gives good examples of good and evil and the outcomes of remaining faithful.

In Christ

Jeff

Re: - posted by dougkristen (), on: 2004/10/14 15:38

Was it "good" for the German Christians to go to church when the Nazi's were killing the Jews?

Was it "bad" for Corrie Ten Boom to hide the Jews?

Was it "bad" for Dietrich Bonhoeffer to resist tyranny?

I am only trying to understand what the Word of God says in this matter.

Grace and peace,

Doug

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2004/10/14 16:33

Was it bad? Was it good? Your questions apply to others who may or may not be believers. We cannot know the Lord's will for others unless He chooses to reveal it. The question can only be asked of God Himself.

His will for each one of us differs according to His plan. The fruits of His work lie in judgement of the wicked, and life for those who obey. The question can only be asked of Him directly concerning His will for each one of us.

Now in general, we are asked to be a fruit inspector. Do the things we do, glorify Jesus or man? Scripture clearly defines the things of Christ and the things of this world.

Peace vs strife, longsuffering vs rashness ?, one heart vs divide heart, one mind vs division, poor in spirit vs pride, thirsting righteousness vs self seeking, etc.

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/10/14 16:55

Quote:

-----14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

We are a spiritual heavenly people and our duration is short on this earth. We are passing through and we are to walk uprightly not just for ourselves but that all men would not be able to say anything wrong against us. In England at one point in history people who were Quakers were very much coveted by secular employers because they knew they would work hard and be honest.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/10/15 8:21

Quote:

-----In England at one point in history people who were Quakers were very much coveted by secular employers because they knew they would work hard and be honest.

Now sadly the refrain is often just the opposite.