

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia
Bible Class Instructor: *Dr. Geof W. Jackson, Board Member*

ROMANS LESSON 85 PART ONE: “DUAL CITIZENS”

ROM 13:1-7 *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.*

³ *For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to [those who do] bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.*

⁵ *Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.*

⁶ *For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷ Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.*

A TOUGH COMMISSION...

This is one of those passages that challenges our passions and our thinking. But God IS interested in our relationship to Civil Governments. As Believers, we have "Dual Citizenship" in this life. We ARE truly "citizens of Heaven", and "aliens" of this world. But we also have a responsibility to the government of the Nation in which we live.

HOW do we balance this? What are our limitations? How can we affect the government under which we live during our "pilgrimage" in this world? Through-out the Church Age, there have been numerous "applications" some good, but more often this passage has been used to establish an "Ecclesiastical Authoritarianism" that has oppressed the people and tainted the witness of the true Church.

Paul words, here, challenge us to *“renew our minds”* to God's Word on this subject.

GOD HAS ORDAINED GOVERNMENT

ROM 13:1-2 *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.*

Before we get into the particulars of Paul's instruction (which we will do next week), we need to establish that "Government" is **"God's idea"** – NOT man's.

Lawlessness is rampant in the world's culture today. It may not be at quite the level of the time of the JUDGES in the OT, but it certainly has become common in nation after nation.

JUDGES 21:25 *In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

And, this would certainly agree with Paul's warning about the Last Times.

2 TIM 3:1-5 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,³ heartless, unappeasable, slandrous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

According to Paul, this lawlessness will even spread into the religions of the day that promise help and hope, but that have NO power to provide it.

For this reason, from the time of THE FALL, God has appointed a “*Federal Headship*” to maintain order and establish right versus wrong.

- Adam was appointed as Federal Head, as Husband, and then Father, and of All Creation: FAMILY was to be the center of government:
GENESIS 1:28-30
GENESIS 2:18-22
- After the Flood, God established that man was to establish a “*community / tribal-rule*” by which evil would be punished – even requiring a “*death penalty*” for murder:
GENESIS 9:1-7
- Under the MOSAIC COVENANT, the PRIESTHOOD was to govern according to THE LAW, and God made provision (*even unto the times of the Kings*) of the way sin was to be atoned for by the Leadership:
LEVITICUS 4 “*The Laws for the Sin Offerings*:
:3 The Priest –
:13 The Congregation –
:22 A Civil Leader –
:27 An Individual –

ROMANS LESSON 85 PART TWO: “DUAL CITIZENS”

- Jesus clarified the issue of dilemma of obedience unto God versus Government when responding to a “*gotcha*” question from the HERODIANS and the PHARISEES:
MATTHEW 22:17-22
- Paul’s words to Titus are startling in regard that Nero had begun his persecution of the Church:
TITUS 3:1
- Peter also addresses this subject when encouraging a “*the suffering Church*” when persecution was increasing under Nero, and other regional and local Governments:
1 PETER 2:13-17

BECAUSE OF THE FALL

As we seek understanding in this subject of the Believer and the Government, it is important to realize the status of a Christian.

Phil 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ who will transform our lowly [vile] body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

A reality of the New Birth is that as a 3-part being we live in THREE different realms:

- 1st - **Earthly** – As Paul calls it “*our Vile Body*” – this is the part of us that is in touch with and affected by the world – And, for an Unbeliever this controls their life (EPH 2:1-3)
EPH 2:1-3 *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*
- 2nd - **Spiritual** – This is the part of us that was “*made alive / re-born / re-created / made righteous and holy*” through our faith in Jesus Christ
- This is augmented by the “3rd Realm... **Soulish**” – This is the part of our being that is in contact with both the Body and the Spirit – The mind, emotions, intellect, and will – the soul makes the decisions to be “*led by the spirit*” or to “*fulfill the lusts of the flesh.*” And these are in constant battle [GAL 5:16-17]

Although our problems arise because we are “**earthly**” it is the “**soul**” that must be “*renewed – transformed*” so that we can make demonstration in this life of the will of God.

HERE is why we need “HUMAN GOVERNMENT” – Both believers and unbelievers are subject to the power of the “*flesh*” – however, only Believers have an inward power to resist and overcome it.

Human Government was “*ordained by God*” to enforce the things that humans do that opposes what is good, righteous, and honorable by God’s perspective.

CITIZENS ON EARTH

1 Peter 2:13-17 *Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme,¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.¹⁵ For this is the will of God...*

In a passage parallel to Paul’s admonition in ROM 13:1-7, Peter establishes the same principle to the Believers scattered throughout the Provinces of the Eastern Empire.

In both **PAUL** and **PETER**, the issue with government is “*evil-doers*”. The need for control is NOT to limit those who do good, but to hinder and/or punish those who do wrong. In fact, a **godly government** would be “*praising those who do good.*”

Believers are to respect and to place themselves in “*submission*” to government as a witness to God. Paul referred to himself as a “citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia” and demanded the rights which were due to him.

ACTS 21:39 *Paul replied, “I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I beg you, permit me to speak to the people.”*

Peter also recognizes that our “earthly citizenship” is not the representation of who we really are as Believers in Jesus Christ. He calls us:

- **Strangers - Paroikos** - *a temporary dweller not having a settled habitation in the place where he resides...*
- **Exiles - Parepidemos** - *A stranger, sojourner; not simply one who is passing through, but a foreigner who has settled down, however briefly, next to or among the native people...*

➤ *Aliens – Xenos - foreign, unknown, as coming from another country*

We DON'T Belong here...

CITIZENS OF HEAVEN

PHIL 3:20 *But our citizenship is in Heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...*

Although it is true and important, that we live appropriately as *"citizens on Earth"* that is NOT our true identity. At the time of the Rapture, this *"vile body"* will be *"outwardly transformed"* to match the Body of our Lord.

This outward transformation is *"cosmetic"* – for our New Creation has already been made in the *"image and likeness"* of God.

EPH 4:24 *"...and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."*

Citizenship – Politeuma - *to conduct oneself according to the laws and customs of a State / Nation*

Although we live here... We DON'T!

There are rules / principles / benefits / privileges which belong to us as Believers... that unbelievers do not have... but they can...

The world system may constrain and oppress us, but we serve a Higher Authority to which ALL earthly powers will someday answer.

Listen to Peter:

1 PETER 2:15-17 *For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as people who ARE FREE, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

2 PETER 3:11 *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness...*