

H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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Romans 13

Owe No one but Love

Romans 13:1-7: *1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher [authorities]. For there is no [authority] but from God: the [authorities] that be are [arranged by] God. 2. Whosoever therefore resists the [authority], resists the [instrument] of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves [a judgment]. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the [authority]? 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 bears not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil. 5. Wherefore ye must be subject, not only [because of the] wrath, but also for [sake of the] conscience. 6. For [because of this] 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; honor to whom honor. (RSV)*

Why do you think Paul admonishes followers to be subject to higher authorities? **Mark 15:6-7:** *6. Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. 7. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas.* The history of the Jews reveals that it was rebellion that always got them in trouble, whether among themselves or when they were in subjection to another nation (Dt 9:7; Ezr 4:15, 19; Jer 3:6-8). Rulers are not a terror to good works. Does that mean rulers are godly men? No. Does that mean if instructed to go against your conscience, i.e. worship a false god, that you should obey? No. Daniel and his three friends refused, as should we. **Titus 3:1-6:** *1. Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work, 2. to speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men. 3. For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving [numerous] lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4. But when the kindness of God our Savior, and his love toward man, appeared (by understanding the cross), 5. not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of a holy spirit, 6. which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ (Jn 6:63) our Savior (ASV).*

Following these instructions may be harder than you think. I am certainly guilty of negative comments about our country's leadership. Yet, the elected leaders are what the majority wanted. Put self in place of the Jews - they desired a murderer in place of a good man. Also consider this, when another person shares information with you or they teach you something, you share a little bit of the spirit of that person. Our experiences with people, good and bad, causes us to retain some of their spirits, or what they manifest of their thinking. The more time we spend thinking and studying about God, the works of creation, and His plans for us, the more we receive of His spirit. God's thoughts, wisdom and His power far exceeds that of all humans put together. So, if we continually seek His will for our lives and live according to His desires and expectations, we are being subject to the higher power, the authority which really counts.

Romans 13:8-10: *8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: [For this reason ^{G1063}] he that loves another hath fulfilled the law. 9. [For this reason ^{G1063}], 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 neighbor as thyself. 10. Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. In the book of Romans alone, there are at least a half-dozen Greek words translated with the English word for. The English word actually carries most of these meanings. However, if the original meaning is not determined, it can cause a person to misunderstand the idea that the writer is trying to convey. For instance: **1 Corinthians 15:3**: *For (gar^{G1063}) I delivered unto you first of all that (gospel, verse 1) which I also received, how that Christ died for (huper^{G5228}) our sins according to the scriptures.* The Greek word *gar* assigns a reason, i.e. it serves to explain or make clear a preceding statement. The word *huper* in the genitive indicates for the benefit of, on account or in behalf of. In Thayer, Strong and other Greek Lexicons you will find a meaning of instead or in place of, which is incorrect, based on the fact that love does not keep a record of our sins (1Cor 13:5), and God is love (1Jn 4:8). The source of this meaning appears to be Irenaeus, considered an early church father (2 AD), who used *anti* (^{G473}) and *huper* (^{G5228}) interchangeably. *Anti* very precisely expresses instead, or in place of, but not *huper*. Also, Irenaeus is a big source of many of the false teachings of the modern day churches. But, Christ did not die to appease (propitiate) God because man incurred a penalty for breaking the law, nor did He die as our substitute to take anyone's personal sins on Himself. Christ died as proof that God has always loved you (Jn 17:23) and wants everyone to understand His love and how any person who so desires can be delivered from iniquity, or the corrupted, twisted thinking of mankind.

Now, restating the verses above with understanding: **Romans 13:8-9**: *8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for the reason (that you owe love to others) [the one loving] another has fulfilled the law. 9. For that reason (that you love others), you ARE keeping the ten commandments, including the Sabbath, i.e. by resting in the understanding of why the Father stood by and did nothing when mankind killed His only Son. Without God's love in the heart, no one will, nor can keep any of God's commandments, written or verbal. Mankind has to be transformed into a different way of thinking - i.e. God's way. Christ will do that for all who have willing hearts.*

Jesus said that He came to fulfill the law (Mt 5:17). How did He fulfill it? I was taught that He died as lamb of God; He paid my penalty for breaking the law; and He took all my sins on Himself. The last two items are not even true. Jesus, however, is called the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29), but how does that idea fit the sacrifices? Sacrifices for sin offerings were different for priests, rulers or common people (Lv 4); then there were peace offerings (Lv 3:1) and the daily offering of Lambs (Ex 29:38), plus goats, birds and even food offerings. How did Jesus fulfill all these? Have you ever heard anyone explain just how Jesus fulfilled these? The closest thing I have heard is that He was the Passover lamb (1Cor 5:7). At Passover a lamb **OR** goat (Ex 12:5) was offered, over which no sins were confessed. It is stated here in Romans 13 how Jesus fulfilled the law: *10. Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* The whole law remains intact for us today. All the sacrifices, even the whole tabernacle service serve as allegories to teach us how to overcome sin and be filled with the love of God.

Romans 13:11-14: *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 armor 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. Our focus should be on being ready every day for the return of Christ. The end of the world will take care of itself. Put on the same character as did Jesus Christ, and walk in the same love that He manifested for all humanity at the cross - Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing (Lk 23:34). Amen.*