

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
Sermon: God Is the Sovereign Authority, Part 1
Topic: Let Every Soul Be Subject to The Governing Authorities
Scripture Text: Romans 13:1–2
1/5/2021

Romans 13:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

This series was spurred by another misuse of scripture by a government official trying to shame people (mainly Christians) into supporting the separation of children, of all ages, from their parents. There are not many things I hate more than to see leader with influence, Ministers, Preachers, Pastor and politicians manipulate and misuse the scriptures for their own purposes implying that God and scripture are on their side. That is why the scripture tells us to STUDY not just hear and read.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We must work to divide the truth from the false.

Addressing this passage and it's uses is one of the hardest sermon series I have ever attempted. I must totally depend on the Holy Spirit to help me not to let any preconceived thoughts cloud my message. Another reason I am doing this is in the following verse.

*Ephesians 5:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather expose them.***

As I move forward in the series, I intend to break down each of the statement in verse 1. The first is the following:

Romans 13:1–2 (NKJV) 1a Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities

Now as far as I can see, God expected His people to obey the governing authorities, kings, masters and family leaders that He had established

There are at least five levels of governing authorities established by God.

1. The sovereign authority of God and Christ.
2. Government or Civil authorities over all citizens
3. The Religious including the Levitical Theocracy and the New Testament church over all believers
4. Parental authority in the home with the husband as the head.
5. The masters/employers over those that serve or work for them

Romans 13:1–2 (NKJV) 1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore

whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

There are a few verses that support Romans 13:1.

- *Titus 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ **Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,***
- *1 Peter 2:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ **Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.** (Titus 3:1)*

It is very clear to me that we, in obedience to God, are to obey governing authorities. These verses taken in their literal sense and in isolation, does make it seem to indicate that we are to obey governing authorities without question. According to an isolated and literal understanding it does not matter if the governing authority be good, bad or evil people in authority but we are still to obey. This was the view of Martin Luther.

- [Martin Luther](#) employed Romans 13 in *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*^[14] to advocate that it would be **sinful for a prince or lord not to use force, including violent force**, to fulfil the duties of their office.^[15] He justified the violent suppression of a peasant uprising referencing this passage

In my study of the bible this concept is not supported through the scriptures.

Here are a few **acts of obedience** in the scriptures:

1. Joseph obeyed the decree to go to their home city to be registered (census) and pay taxes. *Luke 2:1 (NKJV) ¹ And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.*
2. *Luke 2:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, ..., to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, ... ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.*
3. Jesus obeyed paying taxes to Herod, an evil king. *Matthew 17:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ ..., and take the fish that comes up first. ... you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you."*
4. He also encouraged others to do the same. *Luke 20:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."*
5. Paul's is in agreement. *Romans 13:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.*

The question is, "Are there any exceptions to this command.? I think so.

There are examples of disobedience to the governing authorities and there are many in the scriptures. The following are a few.

Old Testament examples:

1. Midwives in Egypt did not obey Pharaoh.
Exodus 1:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, ...
2. The three Hebrew boys did not bow down to the Golden image.
Daniel 3:18 (ESV) ¹⁸ But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.
3. Daniel did not stop praying.
Daniel 6:13 (NKJV) ¹³ So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”
4. David did not give himself up to Saul.
5. Those that did not bow to Baal in defiance to king Ahab.
*1 Kings 19:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, **all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.***

New Testament examples:

1. The Apostles disobeyed religious governing authorities
*Acts 5:27, 29 (NKJV) ²⁷ And the high priest asked them, ²⁸ saying, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?” ²⁹ But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “**We ought to obey God rather than men.**”*
2. Children are to obey parents in the Lord, they are not required to obey their parents while disobeying God or to sin.
*Ephesians 6:1 (NKJV) ¹ Children, **obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.***

I think I covered enough for us to see that we are to obey all governing authorities as long as that obedience is not contrary to God’s laws, commandments or expectations. The decision cannot be based on our own intellect but on the word of God.

God’s authority is not based on the whims of the governing person but on an established standard. In the Old Testament the standard was the Law of Moses. In God’s Monarchical government, (Saul, David, Solomon and others) the authority was in accordance to the Law of Moses first and the king’s laws second.

In a pure dictatorship the government is dictatorial where the only authority is that of the dictator.

It is a blessing, that I think we take for granted, that we live in Democratic form of government.

The established authority of the United States is the Constitution. All other laws, ordinances and authority fall under the Constitution. Takin Romans 13:1 literally, the authority of the US Constitution is ordained by God and we all should be subject to it.

We have constitutional rights that were antithetical to the government of king George. We have the right to peaceful assembly, even in protest to the government, the right of free speech, even against the government all within the authority of the Constitution.

This constitutional freedom does not mean we have the right to engage in rebellion, sedition or the like. That would be in violation to Gods ordained authority.

Message Scriptures: **Romans 13:1–2**, *2 Timothy 2:1*, *Ephesians 5:11*, **Romans 13:1–2**, *Titus, 3:11* *Peter 2:13–14*, *Luke 2:1*, *Luke 2:4–5*, *Matthew 17:27*, *Luke 20:25*, *Romans 13:7*, *Exodus 1:17–18*, *Daniel 3:18*, *Daniel 6:13*, *1 Kings 19:18*, *Acts 5:27, 29*, *Ephesians 6:1*.

END