

ROMANS: The Gospel of God

Chapter 13

Introduction:

1. We should clearly see Paul's mandate for living out the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God (12:1-2).
2. This short chapter deals with only three subjects: obeying civil authority, the duty of love, and holy living.
3. Expository preaching is found in Nehemiah 8:8, and it is to be understood that Rom 13:1-7 is God's words.
 - a. It does not matter at all what you think, or why, or from where you learned those thoughts (Ps 119:128).
 - b. God gave His word to His ministers to perfectly fit them for all good works (Mal 2:7; II Tim 3:16-17).
 - c. The words of Romans 13:1-7 are quite severe about civil authority, and they should not be modified.
 - d. Civil authority has been taught under other topical studies, but this will be phrase-by-phrase from God.
 - e. I have exalted authority of parents, husbands, and employers high, and we must exalt civil rulers also.
4. A Christian's relationship to civil authority is very important and has been and will be stressed (Titus 3:1).
 - a. It is a very controversial subject, like alcohol; it evokes much stronger feelings in men than it should.
 - b. It is an ancient landmark of our faith, and it must be fully taught, understood, and followed (Jude 1:3).
 - c. Be prepared to answer questions your fleshly lusts raise, other Christians ask, and anarchists propose.
5. This church had an ancient infatuation with "patriot" attitudes and rebellion against the federal government.
 - a. Some members decades ago participated with those given to change and rebellion against government.
 - b. A sister church had a tax-evader back in the early 80's and treated him as a martyr rather than a sinner.
 - c. A division occurred by a pastor standing up for a Biblical rather than a JBS interpretation of Eccl 10:4.
 - d. Some began their "patriot" training early with Al Dotson, then Carl McIntyre, then JBS, then SRC, etc.
 - e. Some promoted Goldwater and gave away, "None Dare Call It Conspiracy," when in elementary school.
 - f. We have seen asinine arguments from the Constitution is king ... to the SSA is voluntary ... to wages are not income ... to FRN's are not money ... to the SS# is the mark of the beast ... to 501(c)3 is giving the church to Satan ... to Yahweh's children are exempt ... to common law overthrows the IRS, etc.
 - g. The Internet being what it is, where anyone can publish freely, the heresies and anarchists found there are Legion, which is a warning, especially to the gullible, to be cautious and skeptical of things there.
6. The issue truly rests to a great degree on your understanding and submission to the sovereignty of God.
 - a. Civil government is the farthest removed and least personal, but God is in total control of every move.
 - b. Many cannot stand the idea of not changing government, but how much can you change your parents?
 - c. Because many think they have a role in picking their leaders, they forget the influence is like parents.
7. One of the best methods to rightly view civil authority is to apply your thinking to other authority spheres.
 - a. If you are tempted to send caricatures, jokes, or conspiratorial things, should your wife and children?
 - b. If a politician's personal life has faults or sins, should your wife divorce you for your faults and sins?
 - c. Children can only disobey a parent when that parent contradicts God's word, and citizens are the same.
 - d. If parents made a written contract but did not keep its terms, does this reduce obligations of children?
 - e. If a husband makes a foolish and stupid decision, does it justify wife or children being disrespectful?
 - f. If a husband sins in word or deed, does it in anyway lessen his authority and God-given right to rule?
 - g. If a husband does not keep his vows in his marriage covenant, does that free the wife from submission?
 - h. Should a wife or children draw limits beyond which they will not go, if the limits drawn are manmade?
 - i. How far should a wife or child go obeying the authority of marriage or family? Is it different than civil?
8. One of the best methods to rightly view civil authority is to think about the existing governments in the N.T.
 - a. Get real about the Roman Empire and its dominion over other nations, its paganism, assassinations, etc.
 - b. Get real about Rome's opposition and persecution of Jews and then of Christians. Yet Paul exalted it!
 - c. Get real about a Jew's difficulty of accepting a pagan Gentile authority over his nationalistic obsession.
 - d. Get real about a Gentile accepting a polytheistic ruler with assassinations more common than elections.
 - e. The Roman Empire crucified Jesus Christ and killed apostles, forbid Christianity, occupied nations, lived luxuriously in Rome, used the Coliseum for killing Christians for sport, etc.

9. The kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of Christ are totally separate and opposed if both viewed right.
 - a. We should get over the fantasy and hallucination of a Christian nation that would operate by the Bible.
 - b. America has never been that kind of nation, though there has been lip service by some believing leaders.
 - c. God can send a Cyrus or King James I when we need him, but most of the time nations are our enemies.
 - d. Yes, this country was more Biblically based and Christ-honoring than say Russia or China or India. So!
 - e. When noting “In God we trust” on our money, also mention the all-seeing eye and truncated pyramid!
 - f. When noting, “One nation under God, in our pledge, remember the true identity of the Great Architect!
 - g. Take the Declaration of Independence and rewrite it as children telling parents to get lost for their fun.
 - h. It is a corruption of Bible political science to give countenance to the words, government *by* the people.
10. There is a constitutionality and *de facto* government issue that can resolve some of the skeptics’ objections.
 - a. For anyone that thinks the U.S. Constitution is king, like Chuck Baldwin, ask to see his unconstitutional money, for FRN’s past and present are not lawful money (Article 1; Section 10), yet no longer admit it!
 - b. For those claiming they obey the constitution against usurpers, remind them that Jesus denied the legality of the Old Testament to the Jews to admit a *de facto* government by circulating Roman money.
11. The foolish and modern idea of equality of all men makes it hard to defend princes and servants (Ec 10:5-7).
 - a. Citizens are no more capable of managing issues of state than children are of leading a household.
 - b. The educational, media, and political combines have united to flatter every man into thinking he counts.
 - c. One vote for each man, no matter his ability, wisdom, value, or productively is ludicrous and dangerous.
 - d. Politicians that want photos holding babies, playing Frisbee, eating barbecue, or jogging also hurt truth.
12. So-called patriots and others given to change corrupt the word of God in Rom 13:1-7 to remove its doctrine.
 - a. Some say Rom 13:1-7 describes pastors, as [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#). It was preached here in early 80’s.
 - b. Some say Rom 13:1-7 is for U.S. Constitution, as Chuck Baldwin [here](#). You ask, Show me your money!
 - c. Some say Rom 13:1-7 is not pastors nor constitution, but rather the author’s own idea of liberty as [here](#).
13. Political prophets of various kinds further influence many Christian Americans to confusion or heresy here.
 - a. The false doctrine taught by political prophets like Carl McIntyre to Jack Van Impe promote rebellion.
 - b. The false prophecy of premillennialism demands Christians look for antichrist in our own president.
 - c. The false prophecy of postmillennialism demands that Christians take over the world for Jesus to come.
14. What effect do parents that disrespect government have on their children when they expect them to obey?
 - a. We have seen those who did not stop fighting make shipwreck of their souls, families, fortunes, faith.
 - b. The warnings of ruin and damnation are clear – and whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.
15. We love this topic and want to learn it, retain it, and practice it for Jesus our Lord, for several Bible reasons.
 - a. We know God wisely ordained civil rulers for our benefit (Ro 13:1-7; I Pet 3:13-17; Tit 3:1; Ec 8:2-5).
 - b. He commanded and illustrated it to rabid Herodians and Pharisees trying to trap Him (Matt 22:15-22).
 - c. We are eternal citizens of His kingdom nation far better than the USA (I Peter 2:9-12; Heb 12:22-24).
 - d. We cannot allow our gospel liberty to be accused by others looking for faults (I Pet 3:16; Ma 17:24-27).
 - e. We know Jesus our Saviour, King of kings and Lord of lords, will deliver us (Ps 45:1-7; I Tim 6:13-16).

Related Study Material

1. Extensive outline for “The Ordinance of Authority” ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/authority-ordinance-of.pdf.
2. Extensive outline for “Living Under Obama” ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/living-under-obama-2.pdf.
3. Pastor’s commentary on Proverbs 24:21 ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/24_21.php.
4. Pastor’s commentary on Proverbs 24:22 ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/24_22.php.
5. Pastor’s outline for “Christian and Taxes” ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/practical/christian-and-taxes.php>.
6. Pastor’s outline for “God Bless the IRS” ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/god-bless-the-irs.pdf.
7. Website FAQ for “Are you 501(c)3?” ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/welcome/faq/501c3.php>.

Simple Outline:

- 1-7 Duty to civil government.
 - 1-2 by its authority and source
 - 3-4 by its utility and purpose
 - 5-7 by its needs to govern
- 8-10 Duty to brotherly love.
- 11-14 Duty to holy living.

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.

Let every soul.

- A. Paul taught the authority of civil rulers (1-2), then their utility (3-4), and then duties to them (5-7).
- B. Paul began the most complete Bible treatment of civil authority by calling every believer to order.
 - 1. Like with church attendance, some have bad manners, which need correction (Hebrews 10:25).
 - 2. There are no exceptions, even the Lord Jesus Christ, so get off your high horse and submit.
- C. The reasons Christians might use to excuse their dislike or disregard of civil rulers are quite clear.
 - 1. Knowing Jesus Christ is King of kings would lead some to despise an earthly king like Caesar.
 - 2. Conversion to the monotheism of Jehovah would cause some to despise polytheistic Rome.
 - 3. Knowing Roman authorities had crucified Jesus and killed apostles would encourage rebellion.
 - 4. Knowing Rome was to be taken out of the way for the man of sin would encourage rebellion.
 - 5. Knowing the kingdom of God would fill the world and crush earthly kingdoms would hinder.
- D. *Jews* received this epistle in Rome and elsewhere; they had passionate reasons to hate civil rulers.
 - 1. The best evidence we have indicates that this epistle was likely written in Nero's early years.
 - 2. Nero (37-68) was emperor of Rome 54-68 until Vespasian, Titus' father, followed his suicide.
 - 3. The Jews saw themselves God's chosen people (they were) that could never submit to Gentiles.
 - 4. If ever a nation had a constitutional right to resist and rebel, it was Israel against the occupying foreign government of pagan Rome, and their constitution was the inspired Old Testament.
 - 5. Rome had made Judea a province for about 100 yrs with appointed king and occupying troops.
 - 6. Jesus was born in Bethlehem when Joseph and Mary were taxed by this empire (Luke 2:1-5).
 - 7. Jesus addressed a well-known event of Pilate killing Galileans while worshipping (Lu 13:1-2).
 - 8. See how and why the Jews sought to trap Jesus about paying taxes to Caesar (Matt 22:15-22).
 - 9. The Jews knew if they misbehaved Rome would come and destroy their nation (John 11:48).
 - 10. Rome had recently persecuted Jews by ordering them to leave Rome under Claudius (Ac 18:2).
- E. *Gentiles* received this epistle in the Roman church, and they had reasons to doubt the government.
 - 1. Caligula and Claudius were assassinated before Nero; political and sexual crimes were Legion.
 - 2. Nero was a very perverse and violent emperor, whose reputation in history is quite well known.
 - 3. Gentile converts were often Jewish proselytes, in which case they had similar ideas to the Jews.
 - 4. Gentile converts were also saved from the polytheistic excesses of Greece and Rome to Christ.
 - 5. Gentiles in other nations like Greece, Egypt, Syria, or Britain would have had nationalistic zeal.
 - 6. In either case, submission to a pagan government that sought emperor worship created conflict.
- F. *Americans* of the 21st century are as bad as any criticizing, resenting, or disobeying civil powers.
 - 1. The origin of the nation was in disdain for England and its king's authority and compensation.
 - 2. Infatuation by some of the U.S. Constitution justify civil rebellion by their interpretation of it!
 - 3. They presume by slanted evidence America was built by Christians to be a Christian nation.
 - 4. They not only think it their privilege, but yea their duty, even their Christian duty, to rebel!
 - 5. They will mock suggestions Christians should have been loyalists in the American revolution.
 - 6. Yet the northern variety of them will disdainfully mock the southern for the Confederacy!
 - 7. The heresy that government is *by* the people lends itself to American rebellion to authority.
 - 8. The false doctrine by political prophets like Carl McIntyre to Jack Van Impe confuse yet more.
 - 9. The false prophecy of premillennialism demands Christians look for antichrist in Washington!
 - 10. The false prophecy of postmillennialism demands that Christians take over the world for Jesus.
- G. Who do you think you are that believe you are an exception to this call to duty for all Christians?
 - 1. Does the pope of Rome think that he is excluded by his ecclesiastical authority? What a joke!
 - 2. We are Christ's freemen, but that means we use our liberty to submit (I Pet 2:16; I Cor 7:22).
 - 3. Jesus should have baptized John, but He submitted to his cousin to fulfill all righteousness.

Be subject.

- A. **Subject.** That is under the dominion or rule of a sovereign, or a conquering or ruling power; owing allegiance or obedience to a sovereign ruler or state, a temporal or spiritual lord, or other superior.
 - 1. Compare Bible usage (Lu 2:51; I Cor 15:58; Eph 5:24; I Tim 2:11; 3:4; I Pet 2:18; 3:1,22; 5:5).
 - 2. It is repeated in a few verses (13:5), and it is repeated by Paul to Titus about powers (Titus 3:1).
 - 3. It means to accept, submit, obey, pay, pray, yield, reverence, knuckle under, comply with, etc.
- B. **Kings** or any civil authority exists by the submission of citizens to it, which is commanded here.
 - 1. Do not get involved with those pursuing change, for both parties will be damned (Pr 24:21-22).
 - 2. Since evil communications corrupt, stay away from conspiratorial patriots and other anarchists.
 - 3. If you have done something wrong, hold yourself back and yield to pacify his anger (Ec 10:4).
- C. It is wrong to curse the king or to even think a curse against a comparable civil ruler (Eccl 10:20).
 - 1. It is the mark of a reprobate pervert to speak evil of dignities (II Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10).
 - 2. Consider Elihu's rhetorical questions demanding negative answers about this (Job 34:18-19).
 - 3. The modern concept of "freedom of speech" is ludicrous when it comes to civil authority.
 - 4. There is no place for caricatures, cartoons, railing, reviling, ridicule, or similar irreverence.
 - 5. Men love Sarah calling Abraham, "Lord" (I Pet 3:5-6). When? In her thoughts (Gen 18:12)!
 - 6. Get a load of Paul correcting himself after ignorantly rebuking the high priest (Acts 23:1-5).

Unto the higher powers.

- A. **Power.** One who or that which is possessed of or exercises power, influence, or government; an influential or governing person, body, or thing; in early use, one in authority, a ruler, governor.
 - 1. Compare Bible usage and connection to principalities and magistrates (Luke 12:11; Titus 3:1).
 - 2. The synonym *rulers* is used just two verses later in Paul's present discussion of powers (13:3).
 - 3. **Magistrate.** A civil officer charged with the administration of the laws, a member of the executive government. See Judges 18:7; Ezra 7:25; Luke 12:58; Acts 16:20,22,35,38.
 - 4. **Principality.** The position, dignity, or dominion of a prince or chief ruler; sovereignty; supreme authority. See Jeremiah 13:18; Ephesians 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:10,15.
 - 5. There are angel powers and principalities (Rom 8:38; Ep 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:15; I Pet 3:22).
- B. God raises up rulers high over ordinary men that are called powers, principalities, and magistrates.
 - 1. God raises up rulers, even from dunghills, to inherit the throne of glory (I Sam 2:8; Ps 113:7-8).
 - 2. These highest of civil rulers are responsible for judgment and justice in provinces (Eccl 5:8).
 - 3. All men, but especially Christians, should know God raises up all rulers (Daniel 4:17,25,32).
 - 4. God removes kings and sets up kings (Dan 2:21; 5:18-21; Jer 27:5-7; Ps 75:5-7; Ac 13:21-22).
 - 5. The first civil ruler we read about in the world was Nimrod's kingdom of Babel (Gen 10:8-11).
 - 6. How high are powers? The Spirit calls them gods (Ex 22:28; Ps 82:1,6-7; 138:1; Jn 10:34-35).
- C. It is unnecessary and dangerous to separate offices, persons, and constitutions in the word *powers*.
 - 1. It may help to think of the office more than the person, but where there is one there is the other.
 - 2. The apostle is clearly identifying rulers, literal men, who occupy offices constitutionally or not.
 - 3. A Christian is bound to be subject to civil rulers whether they obey their constitution or not.
 - 4. See this easily by asking whether a wife should obey a husband not keeping his marriage vows.
- D. The *powers* here are not church pastors or elders, because this is a passage dealing with civil rulers.
 - 1. Nowhere in the Bible is *powers* used for pastors, but rather for magistrates (Lu 12:11; Tit 3:1).
 - 2. Should we thus assume that Peter intended deacons by mentioning governors (I Pet 2:13-17)?
 - 3. While the word of God is a metaphorical sword, a minister does not bear it, but rather reads it!
 - 4. Nowhere in the Bible is tribute or custom used for pastoral support, but rather for civil taxes.
 - 5. What minister establishes his pastoral authority upon wrath and revenge rather than the truth?
 - 6. What minister has the authority to execute wrath and revenge when exclusion is by the church?
 - 7. It is interpretational jokes like this that ruin the credibility of ministers to even casual readers.

- E. The *powers* here are not a nation's constitution as some affirm in their effort to avoid the truth.
1. Nowhere in the Bible is the word power or *powers* used for a constitution, but rather for rulers.
 2. This text of scripture uses *rulers* as a synonym for powers, and a paper document rules no one.
 3. Rulers may or may not obey a constitution or law for rule, but that does not alter Christian duty.
 4. If a Christian seeks legal protection like Paul, it must work or he is guilty of civil disobedience.
 5. Frivolous efforts of tax evaders and others arguing by the Constitution have been proven false.
 6. When Jesus applied this text, he referred to Caesar, rejecting Israel's constitution of the O.T.
 7. This civil ruler text is no more about a constitution than marriage texts are about a covenant.
 8. America may have a constitution, but it was violated and left by Abraham Lincoln and others.
 9. God has never asked, suggested, or commanded Christians to interpret law and act accordingly.
 10. If a Christian does not pay taxes, appeals to the Constitution, but goes to jail. He gets excluded!

For there is no power but of God.

- A. Paul taught the authority of civil rulers (1-2), then their utility (3-4), and then duties to them (5-7).
- B. All authority and power is from God, Whose infinite authority is restrained only by His character.
1. We appeal to a marriage covenant to require a wife to submit, so oath of citizenship (Eccl 8:2).
 2. Do you believe God's sovereignty? Providence? Where do you think civil rulers come from?
 3. The pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and He gives nations to whomever He will (I Sa 2:8).
 4. All authority comes from Jehovah, I AM THAT I AM, far higher than the highest (Eccl 5:8).
 5. So be thankful to God for rulers, since He handpicked them, and beg Him for their usefulness.
 6. Jehovah is absolute dictator of the universe, and no one exercises authority outside His design.
 7. If you think, what about evil and wicked dictators? Then think next about very evil fathers.
 8. So these men that God Himself raises up over other men by office and person are called *gods*.
 9. Regardless of the man in the office, authority is from God and must be obeyed (Mat 23:1-3).
- C. First, God *ordained positions or offices of authority* to govern men – here kings and magistrates.
1. Without civil rule, required cooperation, and common defense, mankind would implode in evil.
 2. God does not care about the form of government as lessening or increasing your duty to it.
 3. The top ruler could be a general in a military coup or legally elected like President Obama.
 4. God ordained for you to arrive in this universe under the absolute authority and rule of parents.
- D. Second, God *gifts and prepares men to fill the political offices* for His civil purposes among men
1. God prepares men for ruling other men by giving them greater wisdom and understanding (Gen 41:39-46; I Sa 18:5,14-16,30; I Kgs 3:6-12; 10:24; Eccl 2:26; Is 28:23-29; Dan 1:3-4,17-21).
 2. God prepares men for ruling by giving them physical superiority over other men (Genesis 10:8-9; Judges 13:1-4,24; I Samuel 9:1-2; 16:12; II Samuel 2:18; 14:25-27).
 3. God prepares men for ruling by giving a new heart to prepare them for it (I Sam 10:6,9; 16:13).
 4. God prepares men for ruling by subjecting their people under them (Numbers 27:18-20; Joshua 3:7; 4:14; II Chronicles 1:1; Psalm 144:2).
 5. God prepares men for ruling by giving them gifts (Exodus 35:30-35; I Kings 11:28; Esther 2:7; Ephesians 4:8-12; I Timothy 3:1-7).
 6. God prepares men for ruling by providentially confirming their rule (Exodus 14:31; I Sam 12:18; I Kings 3:28; II Kings 5:1; II Chron 32:21-23; Esther 2:17; Dan 2:37,46-48).
 7. God prepares men for ruling by superior circumstances (Judges 11:1-11; Esther 2:21-23; Ecclesiastes 9:11; Daniel 2:49; Acts 22:1-5).
 8. Consider old examples in our nation's history of the supreme servant in Oliver North and the supreme master in Norman Schwarzkopf. God prepared both men for their respective offices.
 9. God prepared your parents in countless ways while yet children themselves before marriage!

- E. Third, God then *providentially sets up those men in these great offices* for His purpose among men.
1. The Scriptures speak generally of God's work to put men in authority (I Sa 2:7-8; I Chr 29:12; Job 34:24; Ps 75:5-7; 113:7-8; Isaiah 3:1-4; Dan 2:21; 4:17,25,32; Luke 1:52; Rom 13:1-3).
 2. The Bible specifically tells of men God put in office (Ex 9:16; Jdgs 2:16; I Sam 2:30-36; 15:28; 16:1; Ezra 1:2; Is 10:5-19; Jer 27:5-7; 28:14; Dan 2:37-38; 7:6,25; 8:5-8; Ac 7:35; 13:21-22).
 3. In some cases God specifically appointed the man He specially prepared by direct revelation (I Sam 16:1-13); in other cases the specially prepared man rose to the top like cream (Pro 22:29).
 4. Think about the amount of influence you had in the selection of your parents? You did not have the slightest degree of influence. God by His providence selected them for you, and it is your duty to obey and honor them so far as they do not obviously and seriously contradict God's law.
 5. He can raise up a great hunter like Nimrod or a gentle actor or sportscaster like Ronald Reagan.
- F. Fourth, God then *providentially directs the spirits of these chosen men* to accomplish His purposes.
1. He stirs up some men to general rule or specific tasks (I Kings 11:14,23; I Chron 5:26; II Chron 21:16; Ezra 1:1; Proverbs 21:1; 45:13; Jeremiah 51:11; Haggai 1:14; Acts 4:27-28; Rev 17:17).
 2. He blinds or hardens other men (Exodus 4:21; Deuteronomy 2:30; Joshua 11:20; I Kings 12:12-15; 22:23; Isaiah 19:3,11-16; 29:9-12; Ezekiel 14:9).
 3. Have you ever thought about the influence you had in the wisdom, ambition, or direction your parents took at the time of your birth? God's providence directed them according to His will, and it was your duty to submit to them whether they were good and gentle or bad and froward.
- G. Therefore, it is not only the office that is obeyed and honored as God's ordinance but also the man in the office and his knowledge or ambition at any point in time. Our introduction to authority – our parents – proves this fact clearly. The office, and the person in the office, and the person's spirit and goals are entirely by God's providence. We must submit to all of God's appointments for us.

The powers that be.

- A. Whatever civil government is in power by whatever means was put in power by Almighty God.
1. The sovereignty of God is not some minor aspect of God's dealings but pervades all subjects.
 2. The rulers in Syria, New Guinea, Cuba, or America are God's choice fully as much as parents.
 3. Hear the words of Jehovah (I Sam 2:8; Job 12:18; Ps 75:5-7; Dan 2:21; 4:17,32; John 19:11)!
 4. When you wake up after birth to see the parents God gave you should teach you some wisdom.
 5. When you wake up as an adult and see the government you have it is from the hand of God.
 6. How the rulers got in place, whether wise or foolish, whether righteous or sinful, is irrelevant.
 7. What you or previous citizens or rulers think of the present government is entirely irrelevant.
- B. Note the language: not the powers we would like to be, not powers with constitutional authority, not powers that allow life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, not powers that we approve of, not powers that allow gospel preaching, not powers that preserve the unborn, not good powers, etc.
- C. We see both Gentiles and Jews in the church at Rome under the rule of emperor and all under him.
1. As shown in other places in these notes, Christian Jews and Gentiles would have had big issues.
 2. The form of government, the men in it, and their ambitions and intentions are under God's rule.
- D. It does not matter at all the form of government, the men in it, or their ambitions or goals in office.
1. If we take this as Russian Christians in 1950, it intended Joseph Stalin, the KGB, and so forth.
 2. If we take this as Cuban Christians in 1965, it intended Fidel Castro and of his form of rule.
 3. It does not matter how or why the government is in place, for this is God's secret (De 29:29).
 4. In the history of the world there has never a government outside Israel that was the best form.
 5. In the history of the world less than 1% of all rulers at any level were true Bible Christians.

- E. God does not care about constitutional government, as Jesus proved with Caesar to the Herodians.
 1. *De facto* (in fact) government replaced *de jure* (in law) government in Israel by Rome's conquest and in America by violation of the Constitution by Abraham Lincoln and others.
 2. If you doubt about America, see Article 1, Section 10 of the Constitution and ask for money.
 3. God did not care what constitutions existed when He sent Nebuchadnezzar and then Alexander.
- F. The bottom line, which we can repeat, is this: we obey every government until a conflict with God's law or for our lives, since their personal, political, or legal misconduct does not matter.
- G. Bible examples of appealing to law for redress, which are plentiful in the scriptures, were obvious and approved without legal wrangling, entirely different from birthers, preppers, tax evaders, etc.

Are ordained of God.

- A. **Ordain.** To set up (something) to continue in a certain order; to establish or found by ordinance; to institute. To appoint, decree, destine, order. Of the Deity, fate, or supernatural power: To appoint as part of the order of the universe or of nature; to decree, predestine, destine. To appoint authoritatively as a thing to be observed; to decree, to enact.
- B. Compare Bible usage (Num 28:6; I Chr 17:9; Ps 8:3; 132:17; Jer 1:5; Hab 1:12; Acts 10:42; 17:31).
- C. Civil government is not *by* the people – ignore haughty American words – it is *by* God's ordinance.
- D. Civil authority is not an invention of men for civil or national benefits. It is the ordinance of God.
 1. Just as we reason about marriage, which was not invented by men, we reason about civil rulers.
 2. God ordained marriage and civil government, and it is not man's right to question or oppose.
- E. This includes the form of government, all offices high or low, the persons, and/or their intentions.

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

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power.

- A. Paul gave three rules (13:1): Christians must obey civil rulers, being from God, including Rome.
 1. Christians, though in a kingdom under another king, use liberty to obey (I Pet 2:16; I Cor 7:22).
 2. There is no civil power that has risen on earth that is not from God (Dan 2:21; 4:17; Jn 19:11).
 3. This included the Roman Empire in control of the world at that time (I Pet 2:13-17; Titus 3:1).
- B. The power in this context is the authority of civil government and its rulers from highest to lowest.
- C. This verse draws a conclusion from 13:1 that those who do not submit to rulers are resisting God.
 1. There have always been men that resisted authority, whether Lucifer, Cain, Babel, Herod, etc.
 2. The Bible does not teach by precept anywhere that civil disobedience is suggested for saints.
 3. Our only instruction on this point comes from examples in scripture of saints disobeying rulers.
 4. The reason for this distinction is to warn those thinking they are called to correct government.
 5. Citizens no more have a duty to correct rulers than children have a duty to correct their parents.
- D. But God's saints are different, calling rulers gods, paying or serving tribute, showing reverence, correcting any errors, etc. (Ex 22:28; Ps 82:6; 138:1; Matt 22:15-22; John 10:34-35; Acts 23:1-5).
 1. Rather than curse, fuss, or resist, we should pray for even evil rulers (Jer 29:4-7; I Tim 2:1-2).
 2. The Bible's emphasis, which reflects God's mind and priorities, is always on civil obedience.
 3. The Bible does not teach by precept anywhere that civil disobedience is suggested for saints.
- E. It would have been a difficult matter for Christians to submit to the pagan and dominating Romans.
 1. Grasp the Roman Empire and its dominion over other nations, its paganism, assassinations, etc.
 2. Grasp Rome's opposition and persecution of Jews and then of Christians. Yet Paul exalted it!
 3. Grasp a Jew's difficulty of accepting a pagan Gentile authority over his nationalistic obsession.
 4. Grasp a Gentile accepting a polytheistic ruler with assassinations more common than elections.

5. The Roman Empire crucified Jesus Christ and killed apostles, forbid Christianity, occupied nations, lived luxuriously in Rome, used the Coliseum for killing Christians for sport, etc.
6. Such rule cannot be excused as God's judgment, for His secret will is not your duty (De 29:29).
- F. God never called you to check their authority, for they were and are superior by office and person.
 1. Citizens are not the conscience of a nation any more than children are consciences for parents.
 2. You do not have the ability or knowledge to even grasp what they must consider every day.
 3. The conscience of a nation is God, who determines who, what, where, when, why, and how.
 4. The conscience of a nation is its pulpits, which godly men will emphasize over political rallies.
 5. Your God-given and Bible-supported check on any authority is to pray for it while submitting.
 6. We are not anarchists evading taxes or postmillennialists pretending a mandate to rule nations.
 7. If you do not seriously pray daily and fast often, other civil efforts are hypocritical and vain.
- G. Do you understand resisting authority? Do you truly grasp the evil of it? Let the angels teach you.
 1. Angels dwarf men in glory, power, intelligence, and knowledge so that men fear them greatly.
 2. Mighty angels do not use railing accusations against even the devil due to his rank (Jude 1:9).
 3. Mighty angels do not use railing accusations against even Nero, Hitler, or Stalin (II Pet 2:11).
 4. What is railing accusation? Name-calling without godly justification. Angry outbursts, sarcastic comments, public ridicule, private rants, excessive criticism, lack of respect to those in authority, mean speech, slander, and backbiting (Matt 5:21-22; Mark 15:29-32; Job 34:18-19).
 5. The opposite of railing accusations is calling rulers gods, husbands lords, and exalting parents.
 6. You must not resist even in thought or word, even in private at home (Eccl 10:20; Prov 24:9).
 7. There is serious danger for not paying vows due to angels observing your worship (Eccl 5:6).
 8. Women must have long hair or a hat because angels know authority and watch (I Cor 11:10).
 9. Paul charged Timothy to his duties by including an appeal to the elect angels (I Timothy 5:21).
 10. For more about God's angels in general ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/angels-of-god.pdf.
- H. We do resist government under about two situations – when God's laws are at stake and for life.
 1. The only reasons to justify resisting authority are God's clear commands or the taking of life.
 2. We ought to obey God rather than man regarding God's positive commands (Acts 4:29; 5:19).
 3. We ought to obey God rather than man regarding God's negative commands (Daniel 1:8-21).
 4. We ought to obey God rather than man when life is at stake (Ex 1:15-22; I Sam 19:11-14).
 5. Resist passively, since confronting a sword is folly (I Sa 21:10; Matt 2:16-18; II Cor 11:32-33).
 6. John the Baptist did not rail against Herod, and you are not John the Baptist (Mark 6:17-20).
 7. Any combination of abuse of rule, loss of respect, lack of love, inconsistency, unfaithfulness, or any other excuse to disregard authority falls far short of God's word. It does not matter at all!
 8. If we will resist rulers to save life, what about abortion clinics? We cannot stop such parents, and pagans and their children are not the issue anywhere in the Bible. Paul ignored infanticide.
- I. Using a government's legal options or process to help yourself is not resisting authority of rulers.
 1. You must have a clear and obvious right to appeal to authority without sinning by evil resisting.
 2. Joseph reminded Pharaoh; Esther begged to overturn law; Daniel made a deal against policy.
 3. Paul resisted two beatings and a trial in Jerusalem legally (Acts 16:35-40; 22:22-29; 25:11).
 4. Constitutional arguments did not work in Israel, and they do not work in America since 1865.
 5. If you want to avoid taxes, then do like Howard Jarvis in 1978 in California, which was legal; filing a Fifth Amendment return is not appealing to anything but the ignorance of foolish men.
 6. A Christian in America may call, write, or petition government for grievances private or public.
 7. You may vote, donate, or work for the campaign of a person trying to replace an existing ruler.
 8. You may opt out of public education by various means and avoid vaccinations by conscience.
 9. However, be warned, a man must decide before God if it is expedient or binding (I Cor 6:12).
 10. Because our rulers allow things does not justify doing them any more than loose divorce laws justify divorce: see the case of the Westboro Baptist Church and their railing accusations, etc.

11. It is legal to draw cartoons ridiculing the president under this country's profane corruption of freedom of speech, but that does not mean Christians should ever or even consider such a thing.
12. Could we join a march in Washington to repeal a law against Christians? With prudence, yes.
13. Could we sign a legitimate petition to impeach the president for Congress? With prudence, yes.
14. An excellent way to judge is to compare other authority spheres and the liberties granted there.
 - a. For example, may children respond when their father asks where they would like to eat?
 - b. For example, may a wife write her husband a letter respectfully identifying a sin in his life?
 - c. If your boss has an open door policy, you have the liberty to discreetly redress grievances.
15. Sincere Christians have time priorities that greatly minimize or eliminate fighting city hall.
- J. You may talk about government in general if you are not resisting, disrespectful, or accusing it.
 1. For example, our national debt is God's "tail" (Deut 28:44), which should be well understood.
 2. For example, history will be read, learned, or verbalized with its many identifications of faults.
 3. Bible history, where God the Holy Spirit is the narrator, is not an example for your speech.
- K. What is resisting then? It is any thought, word, or deed contrary to the desires or needs of rulers.
 1. This is exactly how we would define it as pertaining to parents, husbands, or employers. Easy!
 2. Recall how carefully and honestly we have sought the will of authorities even over their words.
 3. To resent civil rule and bark against government control or laws (II Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10).
 4. To curse the king, jest about rulers or rule, or accuse with railing language (Ecclesiastes 10:20).
 5. To charge with accusations, speak evil of rulers to others, or answer again (Pro 34:18; Tit 2:9).
 6. To read, help, or endorse those trying to change government, which is sedition (Pr 24:21-22).
 7. To evade taxes by any method not readily approved by the IRS, which allows legal avoidance.
 8. To threaten that you are going to do this or that if they come to take stuff or enforce their laws.
 9. To intend or actually break any law that does not involve God's direct command or human life.
 10. To defend anything you have as sacred and inviolate without direct command or human life.
 11. To think that you have rights, when you need to know your responsibilities and duties instead.
 12. It is thinking America is different and allows you some special leeway to bark or balk at laws.

Resisteth the ordinance of God.

- A. You defy the God of heaven and His authority by dishonoring or disobeying the civil government.
 1. God in infinite wisdom ordained that civil rulers should govern society for the benefit of man.
 2. God wants all things done decently and in order in the church and also in society (I Cor 14:40).
 3. The pillars of the earth are the Lord's as much as any parents or husband (I Sa 2:8; Ps 75:1-8).
 4. Human exist would implode into terrible ruin if God's wise blessing of civil rule was removed.
 5. You are like unruly children or a wife destroying a happy and peaceful family or marriage.
 6. Those resisting this doctrine undermine family and marriage by the Bible authority connection.
 7. Even rebellious Jews that hated the apostles knew enough not to fight against God (Acts 5:39)!
- B. You can talk about loving true doctrine, practice, or worship all you want, but this is an ordinance.
 1. What other ordinances do you want to treat lightly? Which ones will you treat lightly or ignore?
 2. Confused Christians stress details of doctrine or practice but despise His ordinance of civil rule.
 3. How can any worry about details of baptism or communion yet lightly speak of civil authority?
 4. How can any fret about obedient children or stay-at-home moms and question civil authority?
- C. Evil communications corrupt, so stay away from conspiratorial people (I Cor 15:33; Pr 24:21-22).
 1. You know enough to avoid those who corrupt or pervert Bible doctrine, but do not miss these.
 2. Godly men will be very zealous to illustrate, teach, defend, and promote submission to rulers.

And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

- A. If you resist the ordinance of God, any ordinance at all, you should expect severe consequences.
 1. A little Bible reading reveals God's strict judgment of Cain, Moses, Nadab, Uzzah, Uzziah, etc.

2. Paul stated the origin of civil authority and called all believers to submit, so judgment is right.
- B. God's *damnation* does not have to mean hell, as when used about the Corinthians (I Cor 11:27-32).
 1. Many Corinthians were weak, sickly, and died prematurely by their abuse of God's ordinance.
 2. Yet the text indicates that this judgment by God distinguished them from eternal condemnation.
 3. Why do many Christians fear abusing the Lord's Supper but do not fear resisting civil rulers?
- C. This warning by itself should give strong emphasis to respect civil government, but there are more.
 1. God by Solomon promised speakers and listeners against kings would be ruined (Pr 24:21-22).
 2. Some of the Bible's harshest language is used for civil rebels (II Peter 2:10-12; Jude 1:8-10).
 3. Beyond God's supernatural judgment is fear of the king (Pr 16:14; 19:12; 20:2; Ec 8:4; 10:20).
- D. The Bible warns of both supernatural and natural judgment for violating other authority as well.
 1. The Spirit stated such a rule regarding employment, how much more kings then (Col 3:25)?
 2. The Spirit stated such a rule regarding parents (Deut 21:18-21; 27:16; Prov 20:20; 30:17).
 3. If you believe and trust the Bible's severe judgment for child rebels, what about civil rebels?
- E. There are two damning, or destructive, adversaries here – God, and the civil ruler with his sword.
 1. Both are to be understood and taught, for both are true and indicated in this verse's context.
 2. Civil authority is God's ordinance (13:2a), so He judges or damns those that resist it and Him.
 3. Since civil rulers terribly punish criminals for evil works, civil rebels should fear them (13:3).
 4. Civil government carries a big sword (13:4), police and army, so civil rebels should be afraid.
 5. Civil rulers are God's ministers of revenge for civil order (13:4), so rulers do punish resisters.
 6. The combination of God and civil authority is carried throughout and summarized later (13:5).
 7. See the civil ruler by "for" connecting this verse to the next and the instructive warning there.
- F. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. If you resist authority, those under you will also.
 1. Why did Rehoboam like polygamy? Because of Solomon! Why Solomon? Because of David!
 2. The Bible teaches God judges in kind (Gal 6:7; Ps 7:15-16; 9:15-16; Pr 1:31; Job 4:8; 15:31).
 3. The author has witnessed fathers barking and living against authority with rebels for children.
- G. Some ask or argue about the American Revolution, justifying the revolt by God's later blessings.
 1. The nation then had about 2.5 million inhabitants: 1/3 patriots; 1/3 loyalists; 1/3 fence-sitters.
 2. God used the American revolution like He used Israel's sinful request for a king (I Sam 8:1-9)!
 3. For those who bark that they would have been patriots, why did they deny the Confederacy?
- H. Some want to "What if?" in foolish or scornful response, when they should submit to "What is!"
 1. It will be appropriate justice when your children "What if?" you until they reject your authority.
 2. Instead of hoping to discover any exceptions or look for loopholes, pray God for compliance!
- I. Why warnings only in one direction? Why are there no Bible warnings about submitting too far?

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:

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

- A. Paul taught the authority of civil rulers (1-2), then their utility (3-4), and then duties to them (5-7).
- B. Peter taught the very same axiom of godliness and used very similar terminology (I Peter 2:13-14).
- C. First, learn and submit to context. This verse explains a source and reason for *damnation* (13:2).
 1. The damnation of the previous verse should cause terror? Are you terrified? If not, why not?
 2. There are two damning, or destructive, authorities here – God, and the civil ruler with a sword.
 3. Both are to be understood and taught, for both are indicated sufficiently in the verse's context.
 4. Civil authority is God's ordinance (13:2a), so He judges or damns those that resist it and Him.
 5. Civil government carries a big sword (13:4), the police and army, so citizens should be afraid.

6. Civil rulers are God's ministers of revenge for civil order (13:4), so rulers do punish resisters.
 7. The combination of God and civil authority is carried through and summarized again (13:5).
- D. Second, see that powers of this scripture passage are *rulers*, not pastors, constitutions, or concepts.
1. Some have made the ignorant and rebellious choice to corrupt this passage to gospel ministers.
 2. See the comments on 13:1 above where this heretical corruption of God's *powers* was covered.
 3. These Bible corrupters transfer the stated ordinance to another authority to neuter civil rulers.
 4. If that corruption fails, they will make *good works* a litmus test to determine their subjection.
- E. Third, what are the *good works*? This is an important point to clear up much confusion by many.
1. If corrupting *powers* (rulers) fails, some make *good works* a litmus test to decide subjection.
 2. Peter taught the same axiom of godliness and used very similar terminology (I Pet 2:13-14).
 3. The good works here are civil ordinances for public safety and common good of every nation.
 4. This is strictly good citizenship keeping public ordinances, not Bible religion, truth, or wisdom.
 5. What good or evil do civil governments reward or punish? The simple duties of citizenship!
 6. They do not care for Biblical morality beyond their laws or any of the details of our religion!
 7. Every nation's ideas of public duties and crimes vary slightly, just like husbands and fathers.
 8. The good works and evil of a civil ruler will not line up perfectly with the good works of God.
 9. However, every civil government has rules for its citizens that will keep them on his good side.
 10. Hitler's Germany had many laws and ordinances for personal and public safety and prosperity.
 11. Do research: Germany was more efficient as a nation and military than America or Britain.
 12. These vary from nation to nation and from time to time due to God's sovereign providence.
 13. There is no perfect authority, but imperfect authority exercised decently is a fabulous blessing.
 14. When God lists civil laws, He lists parricide, murder, whoremongering, sodomy, kidnapping, lying, perjury, and other similar crimes laid down in scripture (I Tim 1:9-10; I Pet 4:15).
 15. You can easily add from scripture stealing, lying, rape, false advertising, maiming, bestiality.
 16. In America you can further add harassment, libel and slander, contract or covenant breaking.
 17. What nation has not had laws enforcing most or all of these laws as well, by God's ordinance?
 18. Look at the second table of the Ten Commandments and admit that most nations enforce these!
- F. Fourth, what are not the good works? This further helps clear up any confusion by corruption.
1. The government of Israel is not a good example, for church and state were in very tight unity.
 2. God did not ordain civil government for the purpose of enforcing His religion on all citizens.
 3. God did not ordain civil government for the purpose of enforcing His morality on all citizens.
 4. God did not ordain civil government for the purpose of applying His wisdom to all citizens.
 5. God ordained civil government for maintaining peace and safety for all the citizens of a nation.
 6. Think. A person naïvely keeping God's laws or wisdom today would be rightly judged by most civil rulers e.g. laws of immateriality (Deut 23:24-25), polygamy, slavery, beating employees, wine on Sunday or during Prohibition, mercy over sacrifice, demanding Jubilee benefits, etc.
 7. No matter what you alter good works to be, history proves no government has ever kept them.
- G. Fifth, this clause is not conditional at all, but descriptive of all governments and fully obligatory.
1. The passage's language is an absolute statement, not a hypothetical, idealistic, or religious one.
 2. This inspired statement is an axiom of political rule – it is not a political litmus test for citizens.
 3. Rulers are not a terror to good works. God said it; that settles it. Why are you fussing about it?
 4. Rulers are a terror to evil works. God said it; that settles it. Why contradict both God and Paul?
 5. The way to avoid the damnation of 13:2 is to know this simple rule and obey the civil ruler!
 6. Why do you compromise this text? You either misunderstand good works or are an anarchist.
- H. How you view this clause is important to the proper understanding of Christians and civil rulers.
1. If you limit your submission to governments that reward God's morality and punish His immorality, the whole passage is worthless, since there has never been such a government.
 2. Whatever definition you give *good works*, it must be true of the Roman Empire of the apostles.

3. Whatever definition you give *good works*, then your children may apply the same rule to you.
4. Peter taught the same axiom of godliness and used very similar terminology (I Pet 2:13-14).
- I. Not even tyrannical governments of the worst kind are entirely wicked, for there is still much punishment of evildoers e.g. murder, violence, theft, perjury, deceit, fraud, public exposure, etc.
- J. How were Rome's rulers not a terror to good works – they punished saints and promoted pagans?
 1. Paul used these words of a government (Roman Empire) that was a terror to some good works.
 2. Peter taught the same axiom of godliness and used very similar terminology (I Peter 2:13-14).
 3. If you get the correct works in minds – *good works of citizenship* – your question is answered.
 4. The good works Rome punished were religious works, not civil, and Paul and Peter obeyed it.
 5. If a government goes beyond its civil sphere, then God has given what Israel endured under Nebuchadnezzar, the martyrs under pagan and papal Rome, or a forward master/ruler for faith.
 6. Good citizens are not typically punished by a ruler – those citizens that live good, honest lives.
 7. It is quite irrelevant what they do religiously, for it does not alter their authority in civil matters.
 8. Have fathers ever neglected or abused children? Should a child still obey and honor his father?
 9. Have fathers ever been pagan and ridiculed Christianity? Should a child still obey and honor?
- K. What should we conclude when a civil government punishes good works and rewards evildoers?
 1. First, this actually never happens, if good works and evil works are rightly seen as citizenship!
 2. A wicked prince is from the Lord (13:1), God's scourge for national or personal good. Submit!
 3. Civil government is at a national level, so the nation must pay for its sins, including Christians.
 4. We pray for our rulers with great priority and diligence in order to avoid contrary government.
 5. If a father does not teach his children the fear of God (Ep 6:4), must a child still submit to him?
 6. If a husband does not keep his marriage covenant, should a wife still submit to her husband?
 7. If a master is froward and causes wrongful suffering, does it alter your duty (I Pet 2:18-23)?
- L. Some say "good works" are those of Christianity, so a persecuting government does not qualify.
 1. This interpretation is clearly wrong, for Paul and Peter taught subjection to the Roman Empire.
 2. Herod killed John for his own adultery, but Jesus taught Caesar was to be paid (Matt 22:15-22).
 3. Further, God never intended for civil government to teach or enforce religion outside Israel.
 4. Moral good? What government has ever existed to enforce God's moral good in its entirety?
 5. No ruler has ever cared about the mode of baptism, frequency of marital sex, musical instruments in public worship, stoning of disobedient children, moderate use of wine, rejection of pagan holidays, and countless other aspects of Jehovah's true religion clearly in the Bible.
 6. Those that corrupt the intent of these verses about rulers' good works are typically patriot-anarchists looking for an excuse to disobey the authority of civil government.
 7. There is nothing in this passage at all for Christians to judge and then determine right action.
- M. If we allow "good works" anything more than public or societal laws or deeds, no nation qualifies.
 1. The passage's language is an absolute statement, not a hypothetical, idealistic, or religious one.
 2. Making good works beyond civil duty is wrong, for Paul and Peter taught subjection to Rome.
 3. The USA in 2013 has abortion, same-sex marriages, break down of authority, no prayer, Allah is God, no Ten Commandments, evolution taught as science, labor unions, easy divorces, etc.
 4. Therefore, should Christians reject the authority of America's civil government on this basis?
 5. There has never been a perfect civil ruler, including Israel, to fit this literally (II Sam 23:1-5).
 6. Personal, political, or legal corruption by a ruler does not alter our duty as Christians at all.
- N. If a government persecutes Christians though they keep all the laws, they get to suffer for Christ.
 1. Jesus said He came to bring a sword and not peace in families due to religion (Matt 10:34-37).
 2. Suffering is grasped about parents or masters (I Pet 2:18-23), but it is especially true civilly.
 3. The living God sees a thousand factors you cannot in bringing persecution by His secret will.
 4. If a father does not fulfill his proper purpose, it does not alter the children's obedience at all.
 5. If a pastor fails in his faithfulness, there are consequences (I Tim 4:16), but obedience is due.

6. Jesus and the Pharisees provide a perfect illustration of submitting to evil rulers (Matt 23:1-3).

Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power.

- A. If civil rulers are a terror to evil works, anyone thinking about resisting them should think again.
- B. In justifying civil rulers, Paul called all believers to subjection and warned them against resisting.
 - 1. Therefore, the issue here is primarily those choices or activities included under his two rules.
 - 2. Therefore, any fear of the civil power is due to not being in subjection or resisting their laws.
 - 3. Paul went beyond civil rulers as God's ordinance to civil rulers as those able to justly hurt you.
 - 4. He raised the issue of damnation (13:2), and he is now explaining how to avoid their judgment.
- C. Why should Christians submit to pagan civil governments of this world according to Paul's epistle?
 - 1. We do not obey government or rulers due to their great smile or doing well in televised debates.
 - 2. We do not obey rulers because we like them, agree with them, or hope they might employ us.
 - 3. We do not obey rulers because they are Christian, almost Christian, or support Christianity.
 - 4. We obey government out of fear of them and conscience toward God, as Paul concluded (13:5).
- D. Fear of authority is a good thing. Fear starts with God, and it applies to every sphere of authority.
 - 1. We fear God as the foundation for our lives and it extends quickly to His kings (Pr 24:21-22).
 - 2. Children should fear their parents, whether you like the concept or not (Lev 19:3; Heb 12:9).
 - 3. Even pastors should wield their authority when they must in order to produce fear (I Tim 5:20).
 - 4. We live in a *No Fear!* generation that despises right submission and reverence to all authority.
- E. Solomon, whom God chose to write on political science, established the fear and terror of kings.
 - 1. A king is like a lion in that men should fear both, for provoking a king is dangerous (Pr 20:2).
 - 2. Consider Solomon's warning of the wrath of a king (Prov 16:14; 19:12; 30:31; Eccl 8:3-4).
 - 3. Consider Solomon's reason for not cursing the king even in your own thoughts (Eccl 10:20).
- F. You should be afraid if you have any rebellious or criminal thoughts, otherwise there is no terror.
 - 1. It is not the conduct of government that creates the terror here but criminal conduct of citizens.
 - 2. Take Paul's instruction to submit to civil government and avoid the pain civil ruler can cause.

Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

- A. What is *good* here? It is not equivalent to Bible good or moral good, but rather citizenship good.
 - 1. This is only missed by those willfully blind – doing good is keeping the laws of the civil ruler.
 - 2. The only issue of good or evil in this context is the civil, public, societal, governmental good.
 - 3. God did not ordain civil rule to promote Biblical religion, so pagan governments were obeyed.
 - 4. God did not ordain civil rule to promote Biblical morality, so immoral governments are obeyed.
 - 5. A Christian and moral ruler is a great blessing, but pagan and immoral rulers bring public good.
 - 6. A Christian and moral husband is a great blessing, but a decent husband makes marriage good.
 - 7. It hardly matters or affects citizens if civil rulers are idolaters, drunkards, adulterers, murderers.
 - 8. It does matter entirely for citizens to keep national laws regarding of these or other offences.
- B. Governments love good citizens, for it makes their job much easier and encourages universal good.
 - 1. King's appreciate faithful and noble citizens, just as scripture shows (Pr 14:35; 16:13; 22:11).
 - 2. Parents love good children and reward them in various ways for the same reasons as rulers.
 - 3. Employers love good employees and reward them for the same reasons as ruler and parents.
 - 4. Solomon taught that good citizens keeping the king's rod would feel no evil thing (Eccl 8:5).
 - 5. Christians should be perfect in all issues of citizenship, like Daniel in pagan Persia (Dan 6:1-5).
 - 6. Though Persia was pagan without God's morality, Daniel excelled in it though a strict believer.
- C. If you argue against this yoke, you must be a rebel with an evil conscience with wicked intentions.
 - 1. Some argue against this yoke by corrupting *good* to mean Biblical good or good in their view.
 - 2. They will do anything they can to disqualify a government or ruler so they do not have to obey.
 - 3. Yet, the apostles by God's providential timing commanded full submission to pagan Rome!

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.

For he is the minister of God.

- A. Civil rulers are the ministers, or servants, of God. They make the big decisions that affect nations.
 - 1. When God wanted His temple built the first time, He told David, called Solomon, used Hiram!
 - 2. When God wanted His temple torn down, He called on Nebuchadnezzar His servant (Jer 27:6).
 - 3. When God wanted His temple rebuilt, He called on Cyrus His servant (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-13).
 - 4. When God wanted His temple destroyed again, He sent Titus his prince (Dan 9:26; Matt 22:7).
 - 5. God has raised up political rulers to be the nursing fathers of His people (Is 49:23; 60:10,16).
 - 6. The Bible stories from Pharaoh (Joseph) to Artaxerxes (Ezra) to Ahasuerus (Esther) are sweet.
 - 7. We hold in our hands the word of a king who was a servant for the words of the King (KJV)!
- B. He is the minister of God in that God ordained civil rulers for the public good in both directions.
- C. When you think political matters are getting out of hand, think again (Ec 5:8; Zec 8:6; Rev 17:6-7).
 - 1. There is no earthly ruler, no matter how high or powerful, that does not do God's secret will.
 - 2. Negative political events are only so in your sight. Think upon Sennacherib (Isaiah 10:5-15).
 - 3. God so controls and rules kings that they only do His perfect will (Psalm 76:10; Proverbs 21:1).
- D. Civil rulers are gods, for they have the highest authority and do His will (Ex 22:28; Psalm 82:1-8).
- E. Consider the comments above in 13:1 and many proofs that God handpicks and directs civil rulers.
 - 1. First, God *ordained positions or offices of authority* to govern men – kings and magistrates.
 - 2. Second, God *gifts and prepares men to fill the political offices* for civil purposes among men
 - 3. Third, God then *providentially sets up those men in these great offices* for His rule over nations.
 - 4. Fourth, God then *providentially directs the spirits of these chosen men* to accomplish His will.

To thee for good.

- A. God ordained civil government, and He designed them to profit even Christians with civil good.
 - 1. It was the saints in Rome, both Jews and Gentiles, that needed the encouragement to submit.
 - 2. After demanding subjection from them on the grounds of God's ordinance (13:1) and possible damnation (13:2), he then pointed out that God had ordained them for the good of Christians.
 - 3. What about a persecuting power? Even tyrannies provide enormous civil good for citizens.
 - 4. What about a persecuting power? God is in charge of factors far beyond mere political science.
 - 5. The Bible is not written about all men or to all men, but to those called to be saints (Ro 1:5-7).
- B. This is civil good, not moral or spiritual good, so stop adoring anarchist ideas of spiritual morality.
 - 1. Personal protection, public safety, rules of commerce, etc. provide incredible good. Consider it.
 - 2. This is not the good of religion, the good of scripture, the good of morality, but only civil good.
 - 3. Parents should teach their children the many details of what civil government provides for men.
 - 4. This is an absolute statement or axiom from God; it is not a conditional litmus test for citizens.
- C. If you will think about what civil governments provides, you will see the great goodness from God.
 - 1. *Criminals*: they write laws to punish criminals, send law enforcement men to apprehend them, hold them in jails or prisons, and execute capital punishment to get rid of them once for all.
 - 2. *Commerce*: they write laws to protect business, enforce true weights and measures, forbid lies in advertising, establish uniform currency or money, punish frauds and scams, require audits and accounting reports, fund uniform postal services, establish professional standards, etc.
 - 3. *Property*: set and record metes and bounds, patrol your streets at night, copyrights and patents, trademarks, bank accounts guaranteed, register and license your car by serial number, etc.

4. *Safety*: set minimum qualifications for deadly equipment (automobiles), building permits, set minimum qualifications for those practicing medicine, felons cannot buy or own guns, inspection of packaged foods and their factories, USDA, grain and oil reserves, dams, etc.
 5. *Prosperity*: enforce copyrights and patents, reject frivolous lawsuits, punish slanderers, sexual discrimination or harassment lawsuits, degrees must be documented, tax exemptions for children so abortionists pay more, deficit spending, capital write-offs, utilities, monopolies, etc.
 6. *Protection*: will come to your aid as Paul many times, ambassadors to keep friendly relations, use spies to stay abreast of foreign activities, raise armies to wage war, invest much capital for research to stay ahead of foreign governments, local police, FBI, satellites, bank examiners, etc.
 7. *Travel*: initiate, plan, bid, and fund construction like interstate highways; minimum standards for bridges; hinder those trying to enter our country; nearly identical state troopers in any state.
 8. *Legal*: a massive justice system from small claims to the Supreme Court to punish evildoers and reward those that do good, perjury punished, trial by jury to hinder crooked judges, innocent until proven guilty, appeal process, public defenders, every man can be heard, etc.
 9. *Beauty*: punish those that litter, maintain state and national parks, condemn unsightly buildings.
 10. *Participation*: allows those with no wisdom or assets to help pick leaders, petitions take one voter at a time, congressmen will usually answer any letter, city meetings, school board, etc.
 11. *Education*: educate children of the poor to be a future president; use money from lottery tickets to pay tuition for those despising lotteries; free homeschooling by the state; accreditation.
 12. *Religious*: tax the irreligious to subsidize Christian churches through deductible giving, tax-free church buildings, no state church but freedom for any religion, tax exempt without applying,
 13. *Exemptions*: for vaccinations, conscientious objectors, homeschooling, Amish and other faiths.
 14. These few examples could be greatly multiplied, and parents should do so for godly children.
 15. Patriots think negatively about many of these blessings, revealing ignorance and/or rebellion.
- D. You should love civil government, for without it, even though imperfect, society would implode!

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid.

- A. Though civil rulers are God's ministers to Christians for good, civil resisters should be terrified.
 1. Remember, civil rulers are a terror to evil works – meaning that criminals should be terrified.
 2. Fear is a fundamental necessity and valuable asset of all authority and here of civil authority.
- B. The only people that should ordinarily fear government are those with criminal intents. Why you?
 1. If you are a bad citizen, expect to get punished, for you are guilty of a crime against a nation.
 2. If you are a good citizen, expect to be protected and enjoy state benefits, because you obey.
- C. If you choose to evade taxes, meaning to steal from your neighbor, then you should be quite afraid.
 1. Governments require revenue, and they have the right to raise that revenue any way necessary.
 2. If you sign a petition like Proposition 13 in California in 1978, you need not be afraid of rulers.
- D. The evil here is only civil evil, for any other evil is dealt with in those passages dealing with it.

For he beareth not the sword in vain.

- A. God gave civil government extreme authority and means of punishing those who resist their laws.
 1. Rulers will and must enforce their laws and regulations or their good purpose comes to nothing.
 2. If you rebel against civil rulers, you will soon be punished, even if your parents were lenient.
 3. God gave civil rulers the power of life and death, which was not given to any other authority.
 4. *Sword* is a metonym for what a ruler can do with it – kill a criminal by capital punishment.
 5. *Sword* is used this way often in the Bible (Isaiah 34:6; Nahum 3:15; Zech 13:7; Rom 8:35).
 6. In our generation, the sword stands for gallows, gun, lethal injection, electrocution, drones, etc.
- B. All authority requires enforcement some way or it ends up being defeated by rebellious subjects.
 1. Parents do not bear the rod in vain, because they will use it, and it is a sin for them not to use it!

2. If you provoke an employer enough by commission or omission, they should fire you quickly.
3. Civil rulers have the ultimate authority to take life, since it is necessary to keep law and order.
- C. The apostle Paul here proves or at least implies that capital punishment is a right or duty of rulers.
 1. Capital crimes should be dealt with by killing the perpetrators (Gen 9:6; Ex 22:18; Lev 20:10).
 2. Those that oppose capital punishment hate life, for they put no value on the life of the innocent.
 3. Lethal injection of a murderer is a God-glorifying event of civil justice that honors the Bible, gets rid of a murderer, deters other murders, and is the best solution for a murder victim.
 4. See commentary for Proverbs 28:17 ... http://www.letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/28_17.php.
- D. Patriots foolishly get worked up about government agencies acquiring weapons and ammunition.
 1. They want their own guns to oppose a laser attack from a classified drone by a .410 rabbit gun.
 2. They presumptuously think citizens ought to have the latest and greatest in tactical weapons.
 3. They ignorantly forget that in case of civil disorder with 315 million citizens, tanks are needed.
 4. They ignorantly support gun control laws by fellow-anarchists fighting civil rulers with guns.
- E. A ruler has the God-given right to whatever sword he chooses or needs without your permission.
 1. If need be, he may even limit your swords to what he thinks best for the public safety of many.
 2. Gun control laws are part of the right of the state and should be viewed as wise or necessary.

For he is the minister of God,

- A. See comments above on the first clause of this verse stating the same argument in the same words.
- B. Civil rulers are God's servants to provide humanity and His people with civil and public authority.
- C. God designed and ordained five spheres of authority; each has right and duty to punish violators.

A revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

- A. Again it is stated, as in the first clause of this verse, that civil rulers are ministers, servants, of God.
- B. But here the civil ruler is the minister of God for revenge – to execute judgment on civil criminals.
 1. Rather than the minister of good as stated earlier (13:3a), he is now God's servant to punish.
 2. Civil government is God's ordinance, and in order to maintain it, resisters must be punished.
 3. The damnation promised on those who resist (13:2) is God's judgment through His civil rulers.
 4. Civil government in this respect is only as good as its speedy and severe judgment (Eccl 8:11).
 5. A beautiful king is one that crushes all criminals or any enemies of the state (Prov 30:29-31).
- C. When foolish or wild men rebel against rulers and endanger the public, they must be punished.
 1. "A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them" (Pr 20:26). Hallelujah!
 2. "The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it" (Prov 16:14).
 3. "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul" (Pr 20:21). See the comparable proverb as well (Pr 19:12).
 4. "A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes" (Pr 20:8).
- D. The wrath and subsequent terror of civil rulers is only against criminals, as earlier stated (13:3).
- E. God cannot stand the violation of authority, and He has assigned punishment to those in authority.
 1. A parent can and should beat a child, when it rebels against parental authority (Prov 23:13-14).
 2. A master could and should beat a servant, if he opposes employment authority (Ex 21:20-21).
 3. All rule must be enforced sufficiently to preserve compliance and obedience by those under it.

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

Wherefore ye must needs be subject.

- A. Paul taught the authority of civil rulers (1-2), then their utility (3-4), and then duties to them (5-7).
- B. *Wherefore* draws a conclusion from what has gone before by Paul's arguments for civil authority.
 - 1. First, civil authority and the rulers in those offices are God's ordinance for all Christians (13:1).
 - 2. Second, those resisting God's ordained rulers are resisting God and deserve damnation (13:2).
 - 3. Third, rulers are only a terror and source of trouble to those considering or doing evil (13:3).
 - 4. Fourth, rulers are God's servants for good, but they will punish criminals by their sword (13:4).
- C. The previous four verses in this chapter prove and defend that Christians should submit to rulers.
 - 1. There is much more here than mere propriety, practicality, wisdom, convenience, cooperation.
 - 2. Submission to civil authority with honor and payment of taxes is not a gift but an obligation.
 - 3. There is a *must* involved, because it is God's ordinance and damnation is attached for resisters.
 - 4. There is *needs* involved, because if you do not submit there will be judgment, and it will be sin.
 - 5. The two reasons for submission identified by our apostle are of great weight for full obedience.
- D. Paul began with a universal axiom for Christians to be subject to higher powers and repeats it here.
 - 1. Submission to civil rulers is not an optional matter – it is a commandment of God with reasons.
 - 2. Christianity is not contrary or dangerous to an orderly society but confirming and assisting it.
 - 3. An adorning and becoming aspect of sound doctrine is submission to civil rulers (Titus 3:1).

Not only for wrath.

- A. There are two general categories of reasons to fully submit to any civil government as Christians.
 - 1. First, there is fear of the wrath of the ruler that can result in the damnation in context (13:2-4).
 - 2. Second, there is the conscience matter of not wanting to resist God and His ordinance (13:1-2).
 - 3. Paul in this verse transitions from his emphasis on wrath to another emphasis about conscience.
- B. Wrath should be a sufficient reason to obey civil rulers, but there is yet another compelling reason.
 - 1. The wrath is the civil ruler's that carries a sword for even capital punishment if needed (13:4).
 - 2. Rulers are a terror to evil works, and for very good reason, if a person sets himself against law.
 - 3. Resisting God's ordinance will eventually bring civil damnation by God's executive branch.
 - 4. Wrath may be the best or only argument for sinners, but the godly are also moved by another.
- C. Paul makes no appeal to obey based on legality, constitutionality, morality, convenience, affection, or any other common or acceptable reason proffered by many that dislike or resent civil authority.
- D. If civil rulers were unarmed and/or would not harm a citizen, yet there is another reason to submit.

But also for conscience sake.

- A. For *conscience sake* is due to faith toward God and His ordinance of civil government for the earth.
 - 1. If God ordained the powers that be and resisting them is to resist His ordinance, your fear and love of God is at stake if you do not obey what is clearly His important ordinance for men.
 - 2. Servants should obey froward masters with all fear out of conscience to God (I Peter 2:18-23).
 - 3. Christians are free from world governments in a sense, but they are bound to pay (I Pet 2:16).
 - 4. It is an essential part of our religion we are submissive to civil government as much as possible.
 - 5. Paul used this approach regarding God with obedience to parents and masters (Eph 6:1,5-6).
 - 6. There is also natural conscience for public good, enforcing of laws, and continually attending.
- B. The conscience here should include witness before the world though not mentioned (I Pet 2:12-17).
 - 1. One of the most disgusting disgraces to a Christian's testimony is his disobedience to authority.
 - 2. Jesus paid a tribute tax (likely a temple poll tax) though not required to pay it (Matt 17:24-27).
 - 3. When Christians go to trial, there should be only one issue – their religion, not their rebellion!

- C. Most citizens make either a formal or informal commitment to obey and honor the king (Eccl 8:2).
 - 1. American citizens have made such a commitment every time they recite the pledge to the flag.
 - 2. Because there can be no allegiance or obligation to a mere flag without the rulers attached to it.
- D. How can you with good conscience require obedience to your authority based on God's ordinance and word, if you are yourself balking in attitude, word, or actions toward civil authority over you?

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

For for this cause pay ye tribute also.

- A. The singular cause, or singular basis, for paying taxes is traced back to conscience toward God.
 - 1. There are clearly two reasons given in the previous verse and context for obeying civil rulers.
 - 2. Conscience being the latter of two factors listed, the demonstrative pronoun *this* references it.
 - 3. Conscience is now the overriding factor based on Paul's transition to it by the wording of 13:5.
 - 4. We limit the singular cause to conscience, because Paul had already stressed wrath (13:2-4).
 - 5. Paul explained the conscience factor in that civil rulers are God's ministers and deserve pay.
 - 6. Paul explained the conscience factor in that civil rulers are continually ruling and deserve pay.
- B. Without repeating fear of the ruler, which must punish for tax evasion, Paul stressed conscience.
 - 1. Civil rulers must punish tax evaders, for governing both domestic and foreign requires revenue.
 - 2. Gamaliel argued leniency for the apostles by appealing to Theudas and Judas (Acts 5:34-37).
 - 3. Jesus showed the importance of conscience to pay taxes in a matter with Peter (Matt 17:24-27).
 - 4. Fear of the rulers' wrath need not be repeated for it was stated, obvious, and implied/included.
- C. **Tribute.** A tax or impost paid by one prince or state to another in acknowledgement of submission or as the price of peace, security, and protection; rent or homage paid in money or an equivalent by a subject to his sovereign or a vassal to his lord. [OED]

For they are God's ministers.

- A. This is about the highest title they can be given to elicit conscientious conviction from Christians.
 - 1. This is the third time in this short section that civil rulers are referred to as the ministers of God.
 - 2. Paying taxes to support them should be viewed little different than supporting gospel preachers.
- B. Civil government is so important to God and so necessary for man that rulers are God's ministers.
 - 1. Civil rulers are called gods, as was shown (Ex 22:28; Ps 82:1,6; John 10:35), for their high role.
 - 2. To not pay taxes is as offensive to God as not paying His priests (O.T.) or His preachers (N.T.).
 - 3. This reason for paying taxes should grab Christians more than the very real threat of the IRS.
- C. How can a pagan, tyrannical ruler be God's minister, and is not my subjection endorsement of evil?
 - 1. God has ministers of several kinds, actually five of them according to five authority spheres.
 - 2. They represent God and implement His will among men for their good and intended prosperity.
 - 3. You obey them by God's laws and the laws of nature; this does not endorse their lives at all.
 - 4. You must learn, very carefully, to separate the person from the office to avoid confusion here.
- D. What five rulers do personally is irrelevant to you, who are bound only to their laws (Mat 23:1-3).
 - 1. Each authority will answer to God for his life and rule, to you only in extreme cases (Jas 3:1).
 - 2. It did not matter at all to Paul the personal faults, weaknesses, or wickedness of Rome's rulers.

Attending continually upon this very thing.

- A. Civil rulers must *attend continually* to the work of governing a nation or other political divisions.
 - 1. Read carefully in context lest you assign their attendance to tax revenues rather than governing.
 - 2. It is a full-time job for rulers and their necessary supporting cast to rightly govern men well.
 - 3. They cannot take a day off, week off, or month off without careful plans for a limited vacation.
 - 4. In a populous nation with many foreign relations also, things needing rule happen constantly.
- B. What is the very thing they continually attend to? Civil good or enforcement of Romans 13:3-4!
- C. Civil rulers cannot be out pursuing business or employment means for income, so they need taxes.

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.

Render therefore to all their dues.

- A. On the basis of what was taught in the previous verse, all monies due the state should be *rendered*.
 - 1. **Render.** To pay as a rent, tax, or tribute, or other acknowledgement of dependence. [OED]
 - 2. Paying the state out of your earnings and profits means a transfer of wealth from you to them.
 - 3. There is a cost to having the benefits of the state, and God's religion expects you to pay all due.
 - 4. The nature of civil government and taxes is that citizens pool their resources for greater good.
 - 5. Jesus was born when His parents paid taxes, and He taught the same (Lu 2:1-7; Matt 22:15-22).
- B. *Therefore* draws a logical and beautiful rule of Christianity – we support civil government's taxes.
 - 1. The reasons are: (a) God ordained rulers, (b) they are for our good, and (c) rulers need revenue.
 - 2. There is less nobility involved in paying taxes than there is necessity and obligation for good.
 - 3. There is no reason not to pay, for any wrath outside of civil good God has allowed (Ps 76:10).
- C. *All* taxes of any kind affecting any part of your life are fully due to the taxing authority of rulers.
 - 1. It is a travesty to hear Christians debating which taxes they approve as legitimate or worthy.
 - 2. No matter if major and life altering or minor and irritating, civil rulers are due all their taxes.
 - 3. Children not paying aged parents deny the faith and are worse than infidels (I Tim 5:8), so here.
 - 4. It does not matter to the Christian paying if they use the funds to crucify Jesus or abort babies.
- D. The language chosen by the Holy Spirit – all their *dues* – is one of debt and obligation to the state.
 - 1. **Dues.** That which is due; a debt. That which is due or owed to any one; that to which one has a right legal or moral.
 - 2. To render to their dues is not a good deed on your part as much as an obligation of citizenship.
 - 3. By honoring, obeying, and paying you are not giving a gift, because this is what you owe them.
 - 4. You should not get excited about *due* benevolence without excitement these *dues* (I Cor 7:3)!
- E. But if I render to all their dues, then I am supporting all kinds of evil that is contrary to godliness.
 - 1. God will hold the ruler accountable for his use of tax revenues, not the citizens paying by law.
 - 2. Jesus required paying Caesar, though he had killed John Baptist and would soon crucify Him.
 - 3. We care little what government does itself or requires of others, if we can fully serve our God.
- F. For more about Christians and taxes ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/practical/christian-and-taxes.php>.
- G. For more about Christians and America's IRS ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/god-bless-the-irs.pdf.

Tribute to whom tribute is due.

- A. **Tribute.** A tax or impost paid by one prince or state to another in acknowledgement of submission or as the price of peace, security, and protection; rent or homage paid in money or an equivalent by a subject to his sovereign or a vassal to his lord. [OED]
- B. Tribute is often payment by the citizens of one nation to another nation that has conquered them, which is a very difficult tax to pay, since it was not part of the legal or political process at all.

- C. Tribute is a tax, and it can vary as the definitions above show, and it is used variously in the Bible.
1. A tax of submission and surrender one nation to another (Joshua 16:10; 17:13; Matt 22:15-22).
 2. It was a tax that even Israelites paid to God or the nation (Num 31:28; II Chr 10:18; Ezra 7:24).
 3. It was a poll tax paid for temple maintenance in Jerusalem (Matt 17:24-27; Ex 30:13; 38:26).
 4. It was a donation or gift to the Lord as Sovereign of Israel in a freewill offering (Deut 16:10).

Custom to whom custom.

- A. **Custom.** Customary service due by feudal tenants to their lord; customary rent paid in kind or in money; any customary tax or tribute paid to a lord or ruler. Tribute, toll, impost, or duty, levied by the lord or local authority upon commodities on their way to market; esp. that levied in the name of the king or sovereign authority upon merchandise exported from or imported into his dominions; now levied only upon imports from foreign countries. [OED]
- B. The Persians and Jews both collected custom, which Israel's enemies stated (Ezra 4:13,20; 7:24).
- C. Matthew collected custom before Jesus made him an apostle (Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27).
- D. Jesus acknowledged that the kings of the earth take custom or tribute of strangers (Matthew 17:25).

Fear to whom fear.

- A. Fear is due the king or magistrate due to his authority; honor is due to them both for their dignity.
- B. Government officials should be shown the submissive awe and intimidation their offices deserve.
1. Some anxiety or dread should form the submissive awe and reverence to police, military, etc.
 2. Paul already established their authority and power should evoke fear in civil rebels (13:3-4), though obedient and compliant citizens should not fear in the same way as those in rebellion.
 3. If more citizens showed proper fear of authority, it would promote obedience across the nation.
- C. Fear is a bad thing only in an effeminate nation losing sight of proper intimidation by authority.
1. Fear of authority is a good thing. Fear starts with God, and it applies to all spheres of authority.
 2. We fear God as the foundation for our lives and it extends quickly to His kings (Pr 24:21-22).
 3. Children should fear their parents, whether you like the concept or not (Lev 19:3; Heb 12:9).
 4. Even pastors should wield their authority when they must in order to produce fear (I Tim 5:20).
 5. We live in a *No Fear!* generation that despises right submission and reverence to all authority.
- D. Solomon, whom God chose to write on political science, established the fear and terror of kings.
1. A king is like a lion in that men should fear both, for provoking a king is dangerous (Pr 20:2).
 2. Consider Solomon's warning of the wrath of a king (Prov 16:14; 19:12; 30:31; Eccl 8:3-4).
 3. Consider Solomon's reason for not cursing the king even in your own thoughts (Eccl 10:20).
- E. You should be afraid if you have any rebellious or criminal thoughts, otherwise there is no terror.
1. It is not the conduct of government that creates the terror here but criminal conduct of citizens.
 2. Take Paul's instruction to submit to civil government and avoid the pain civil ruler can cause.
- F. While you should address legislators respectfully, there should be fear of the executive branch.

Honour to whom honour.

- A. Fear is due the king or magistrate due to his authority; honor is due to them both for their dignity.
- B. Government rulers should be shown special regard and preferential treatment their offices deserve.
1. You should fear the executive branch; you should address legislators or judges respectfully.
 2. Peter included this exhortation and rule of godliness in his words about civil rulers (I Pet 2:17).
 3. Scripture severely warns of setting light or facial expressions to parents (Deut 27:16; Pr 30:17).
 4. Rulers high and low have a right to honor in thought, word, gesture, and cheerful compliance.
 5. If you do not maintain proper respect of officials, you will likely soon disregard their laws.
 6. If you do not maintain proper respect of officials, you pollute even your obedience to them.

- C. Consider a few examples from scripture of the reverence shown the persons in civil government.
 1. “We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness” (Acts 24:3).
 2. “Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself” (Acts 24:10).
 3. “I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness” (Ac 26:25).
 4. We wonder who the most excellent Theophilus was to whom Luke wrote (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1).
- D. What about examples in the Bible of reverence not shown to rulers? Do they allow our disrespect?
 1. Mordecai did not honor Haman as required due to God’s perpetual hatred of the Amalekites and/or the divine reverence Haman expected (Esther 3:1-6; Exodus 17:14-16; I Samuel 15:8).
 2. Elisha did not speak kindly or reverently of Jehoram as the prophet of God (II Kings 3:11-14).
 3. John corrected Herod for his adultery, but he was God’s prophet and did not rail (Matt 14:1-5).
 4. Jesus called Herod a fox as prince of the kings of the earth and Herod’s God (Luke 13:31-33).
- E. If you know faults, weaknesses, or offences of a ruler, then honor him for his office (Matt 23:1-3).
- F. You do not have the freedom of speech against authority (Eccl 10:20; Job 34:18-19; II Pet 2:10).
- G. Since much of this verse’s actions will have witnesses, it is a great opportunity to adorn the gospel.
- H. Once we pay debts to those in authority, we must pay all others and show moral love (Rom 13:8).

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

Owe no man any thing.

- A. This verse begins the second section of chapter 13 with a three-verse lesson about loving all men.
- B. Paul introduced this practical section of Romans with a mandate for living out God’s will (12:1-2).
- C. Paul transitioned from what is owed rulers to what is owed all men by Christians living God’s will.
 1. Christians owe all that is due their civil rulers: tribute, custom, fear, and honour (Rom 13:7).
 2. Christians owe all other men they meet in life the second commandment of neighborly love.
- D. If any obligation arises to ordinary men apart from civil rulers it should be paid fully and promptly.
 1. Tribute and custom are due rulers, and all other rents, fees, and contracts are due all other men.
 2. As the former were to be rendered to God’s ministers, the latter were to be rendered to all men.
 3. Fear and honor are owed to men by employment relations, their profession, their wealth, etc.
 4. Rents, fees, and other contractual terms or arrangements should also be kept with all fidelity.
 5. Every obligation created by relationships, training, employment, business, investment, etc.
 6. The kind of debt being considered here was one causing harm or ill to your neighbor (13:10).
- E. While God’s ordinance of civil government required full compliance with rulers, God’s second commandment required benevolent treatment of all other men, whether superior, equal, or inferior.
 1. Christians need to be subject to kings and magistrates for both wrath and conscience (13:1-7).
 2. Christians are also taught by grace to desire and provide the best treatment of all other men.
- F. Debts to other men should be strictly avoided and contractual payments should be made on time.
 1. Christians should have a strong work ethic to provide for their needs (I Thes 4:11-12; Tit 3:14).
 2. Christians should be frugal, economical, and save for needs and others (Pr 6:8; 30:25; Ep 4:28).
 3. Christians should teach these fundamental rules of godliness to their children (Pr 6:1-11; etc.).
 4. Christians should have a spiritual and eternal purpose and avoid worldly excess (I Tim 6:6-10).
 5. Christians should despise those vices like gambling that cause men to incur unnecessary debts.
 6. Christians should crave an honest name before all men to make payments and keep promises.
- G. This is not an economic section of scripture condemning financial contracts or mortgage loans, etc.
 1. The kind of debt being considered here was one causing harm or ill to your neighbor (13:10).

2. For those fearful of loans by this text, any contract with financial terms is equivalent to a loan.
 3. Renting an apartment, which most consider opposite a loan, can have the full amount enforced.
 4. When debt payments are made on time, nothing is truly owed, as the mortgagor holds the deed.
 5. If all obligations are prohibited here, then apprenticeships, school, or training with agreements for future service would all be prohibited, though all parties to the contract greatly benefit by it!
 6. Yet, the amount of your debts, your credit score, your ability to cover your needs, your ability to absorb negative financial events, and your ability to help others reflect on your reputation.
- H. Godly Christians living Paul's mandate from Romans 12:1-2 will carefully keep debt obligations.
1. Consider how God does not require vows, but He does require paying any vows (Eccl 5:1-7).
 2. God does not condemn financing arrangements, but He does condemn not paying them on time.
 3. Commendations to every disciplined and prudent man keeping financial and other obligations.
 4. Do you use the grace period? Why? Why is it called grace? Grace payments violate this verse.
 5. God considers debtors to be tails and creditors to be heads (De 28:44). So what are you overall?
- I. For details of Bible Economics: <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/practical/bible-economics/sermon.php>.

But to love one another.

- A. We will call this neighborly love, since Paul has already dealt with brotherly love (Rom 12:9-16).
1. There is no command for fondness or friendship, for it is proper treatment rather than affection.
 2. This is benevolent kindness to treat men with goodwill for their benefit, happiness, protection.
 3. God's example by sun and rain on evil and good is without affection (Mat 5:43-48; Ps 7:11).
 4. The kind of love taught here is *love worketh no ill to his neighbor*, as restated below (13:10).
- B. Neighborly love of the second commandment you owe to all men for as long as you will live here.
1. The Christian religion is as simple as two commandments – love of God and love of neighbor.
 2. This is a debt you cannot pay off, so you are always owing and must be always paying it to all.
 3. You will never reach the point where you can stop loving others, because it is our way of life.
- C. If you want to fulfill the apostolic mandate of 12:1-2, then love of others must be very important.
- D. What is it to love one another? Start with I Corinthians 13:4-7, but Paul will explain more below.

For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

- A. God ordained civil rulers that we are to obey as above (13:1-7), but there is much more to His law.
1. Civil rulers have laws, which were implied already (13:1-7), but now it is God's law (13:10).
 2. The good, acceptable, and perfect will of God for Christians can be greatly fulfilled by love.
- B. Everything God requires of men toward one another can be fulfilled by merely loving all men.
1. Love of others is the greatest duty horizontally with other men and shows God's work of grace.
 2. Love as defined by the Holy Spirit is more excellent than apostolic gifts (I Cor 12:28 – 13:3).
 3. For more about the definition of love ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/definition-of-love.pdf.
 4. For more about the greatness of love ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/love-is-the-greatest.pdf.
- C. Paul then listed the second table of the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.
1. The magistrate has laws and sword to protect your neighbor, but your faith should restrain you!
 2. True love of the children of God is by loving God and keeping His commandments (I Jn 5:2-3).
 3. Honor to parents, the fifth commandment, is omitted, since it is not properly a neighborly duty.
 4. Using inductive reasoning, Paul shows that God's commandments are all covered under love.

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.

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

- A. Why are adultery and murder switched? To show order is not crucial or the popularity of sex sins.
- B. If you love a neighbor, you will not consider hurting him/her by committing adultery with him/her.
- C. If you love a neighbor, you will not consider hurting him by committing adultery with his spouse.
- D. If you love a neighbor, you would not think of stealing virginity and humbling his/her daughter.
- E. If you love a neighbor, you will not use divorce laws to leave your spouse or to get a neighbor's.
- F. Godly men or women will do all they can to promote their neighbor's marriage to their spouse.
- G. Godly men or women will do all they can to promote their neighbor's sex life with their spouse.
- H. Godly men or women will avoid any active towards adultery and any passive temptations as well.
- I. This hits flirting, filthiness, texting, sexting, Facebook, etc., for foolish thoughts are sin (Pr 24:9).
- J. A woman will wear modest clothing, avoid flirting with men, have a shamefaced and modest look.

Thou shalt not kill.

- A. If you love your neighbor, you would never think of taking his life or even of damaging his life.
- B. If you love your neighbor, you will warn him about anything you see that might endanger his life.
- C. You will assist, help, or defend a neighbor against criminals/enemies that would try to take his life.
- D. You will do everything you can to protect or warn your neighbor even about an accidental death.
- E. You will do anything you can to deliver a person from unjust death (Pr 31:8; 24:11-12; Esth 4:14).
- F. Jesus taught that the sixth commandment was broken by unjustified anger or railing (Mat 5:21-22).
- G. How carefully do you drive? How defensively? You have a deadly weapon in your hand with a car.
- H. Learn the Bible's rules for manslaughter by not properly caring for dangerous oxen (Ex 21:29).

Thou shalt not steal.

- A. If you love your neighbor, you would never think of taking anything belonging to your neighbor.
- B. You will protect his property rights with all the creativity, faithfulness, and zeal you can muster.
- C. If you find something of your neighbor, you will return it to him as soon as convenient (Ex 23:4-5).
- D. You will not barter a person down unnecessarily, for God has already condemned it (Pr 20:14).
- E. You will always give or sell a full amount for a price; you will always pay a full price for things.
- F. You will not hold wages overnight from a day laborer since his heart is set on them (Lev 19:13).
- G. You will be very careful with all weights and measures involved in a transaction (Lev 19:36).
- H. You will not purloin on the job by small thefts of time or things of your master (Titus 2:9-10).
- I. You will always give a full day's work for a full day's pay ... consider it the other way around!

Thou shalt not bear false witness.

- A. If you love your neighbor, you would never bear false witness – testify a lie in court – against him.
- B. If you love a neighbor, you would never slander him in private out of court to hurt his reputation.
- C. Backbiting, talebearing, tattling, and whispering are all included here as violations of his name.
- D. You will not backbite, and you will also stop backbiters from doing their dirty work (Prov 25:23).
- E. You will do everything you can to protect his good name by rebuking others' slander or tattling.
- F. Silence can be as wicked as words, if you do not speak up for your neighbor when you can help.
- G. You will enhance a neighbor's reputation short of flattering or lying when you have opportunity.
- H. Do you recall David's outstanding eulogy of Saul in spite of his wickedness and death attempts?

Thou shalt not covet.

- A. If you love your neighbor, you would never want to desire what he has in order to take it from him.
- B. If you love a neighbor, you are glad for what he has, what he gets, especially if better than yours!
- C. You would not even allow the thought of desiring his stuff that could easily lead to other sins.
- D. Love is glad for your neighbor and rejoices at his successes and advancements without ill feelings.
- E. You will do all you can to protect and preserve his assets without any desire for his loss (Pr 17:5).
- F. Are you thankful for your neighbor's prettier wife, bigger house, finer cars, and recent promotion?
- G. You will help your neighbor live by you safely by being fully happy for his prosperity (Pr 3:29).

And if there be any other commandment.

- A. Any other commandment in God's Law pertaining to others and relationships is settled in love.
- B. All of Moses' rules for treatment of others and their things are easily covered by neighborly love.
- C. Without knowing all Moses' Law, always seek the benefit, happiness, and protection of neighbors.

It is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely,

- A. You can summarize the second table of Moses' Law with the simple command to love neighbors.
- B. If you can keep the love of neighbor before your eyes at all times with all men, you are all set!
- C. The Holy Spirit knows when He is brief in a statement, and love of neighbor is certainly one.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

- A. Moses had taught this in his law, which was the governing rule for relationships (Lev 19:17-18).
- B. Jesus confirmed Moses but also taught it a different way through the golden rule (Luke 6:31).
- C. Without knowing all Moses' Law, always seek the benefit, happiness, and protection of neighbors.
- D. Beyond avoiding any negative treatment of neighbors, you want to also keep them from sinning.

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

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.

- A. Love never does anything negative in thought, word, gesture, or deed to anyone else in the world.
 - 1. If in a position of authority over a neighbor, you only do what is just and fair in God's sight.
 - 2. If the neighbor has done wrong and you are involved, you only do what is totally just and fair.
 - 3. You never modify the will and word of God, no matter the circumstances or personal feelings.
 - 4. You conduct yourself always for the benefit, happiness, and protection of all your neighbors.
- B. This love is not fuzzy, warm, romantic feelings that the world calls love, but rather kind actions.
 - 1. God is angry with the wicked every day (Ps 7:11), but does good to them daily (Mat 5:43-48).
 - 2. This is the same love you have toward your neighbor by praying for him and doing him good.
- C. Who is your neighbor? Anyone God puts in your path, including your enemies (Luke 10:25-37).
 - 1. This is not just your friends or family members or church members, but everyone you meet.
 - 2. The people you dislike the most or that irritate you the most are the ones you should focus on.

Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

- A. The Law of God seems intimidating at times, but you can keep its terms by loving your neighbor.
- B. Without knowing all Moses' Law, always seek the benefit, happiness, and protection of neighbors.
- C. What is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God pertaining to others? Simply love them!

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.

And that.

- A. This verse begins the third section of chapter 13 with a four-verse lesson on holy living for eternity.
- B. Paul introduced this practical section of Romans with a mandate for living out God's will (12:1-2).
 - 1. God's merciful salvation makes it our reasonable service to reject the world and live His will.
 - 2. One basis, motive, reason, or way to keep Paul's mandate is fulfilling brotherly love (13:8-10).
 - 3. Another basis, motive, reason, or way to prove God's will is holy living for eternity (13:11-14).

Knowing the time.

- A. We understand *the time* here to be a reference to gospel times of this dispensation of Jesus Christ.
 - 1. Not only is *time* here, but we also have *night, day, darkness, and light* following (13:12-13).
 - 2. By comparing scripture (I Cor 2:13), Paul used very similar language about the gospel day.
 - 3. There is more involved in 13:11-12 than only weeks or years since conversion (13:11c), for that is a minor factor in comparison and not consistent with the night, day, darkness, light language.
 - 4. The observations from the prophets and apostles that follow apply as well to verses 13:12-13.
 - 5. See the gospel day in which the Romans lived and the day of Christ coming (I Thess 5:4-10).
- B. The key *time* perspective was living in the last days with the next large event being Christ's return.
 - 1. The prophets prophesied and John and Jesus announced a fulfilled *time* (Matt 3:2; Mark 1:15).
 - 2. Jesus identified this new gospel era as *the acceptable year* of the Lord (Luke 4:19; Isaiah 61:2).
 - 3. The *night* being far spent and the *day* at hand (13:12) describes the new gospel dispensation, for the ignorance of Gentiles was being driven back by gospel light (Acts 17:30-31; 14:16).
 - 4. Peter also wrote the Jews about the dark works of the Gentiles they had followed (I Pet 4:1-5).
 - 5. A fantastic reformation in God's worship was taking place, but this is much more (Heb 9:10).
 - 6. The gospel of Jesus turned the world upside down as its light shone upon Gentiles (Acts 17:6).
 - 7. It was the acceptable *time* and *day* of salvation for gospel conversion of Gentiles (II Cor 6:1-2).
 - 8. The Romans lived in a period of time called *To Day* by David and by Paul (Ps 95:7; Heb 3:13).
 - 9. The *time* here is the third dispensation – *the last days* – of the gospel day and rest of Christ.
 - 10. The *time* of dark and dead heathenism was past; it was the gospel day and His coming drew on.
 - 11. There are other verses to the *day, light, or time* of the gospel light (Isaiah 2:1-5; 9:1-2; 11:9-16; 49:5-13; 60:1-5; 61:1-3; 62:1-5; Amos 9:11-12; Micah 4:1-2; Zech 8:20-23; Matt 4:12-16; 16:3; Luke 1:78-79; 2:29-32; 4:17-21; 19:42-44; John 1:4-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 12:35-36,46; Acts 11:18; 13:42-49; 14:15-18; 26:16-20,23; Rom 11:11-15; 15:8-12; II Cor 4:6; 6:1-2; Eph 4:17-19; 5:6-14; I Thess 5:4-10; Heb 3:7,13,15; 4:7; 12:27-29; I Pet 1:5; 2:9; I Jn 2:8,18; Jude 1:18).
 - 12. Jesus said of Isaiah 61:1-2, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," but it was only the beginning, because the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles (Luke 4:16-21; Isaiah 60:1-5).
 - 13. This transitional generation should have affected every Gentile hearer of Paul (Acts 13:46-49).
 - 14. The great mystery of godliness includes Christ being preached to the Gentiles and believed on in the world, which was a stupendous event never considered or done before (I Tim 3:16).
 - 15. The best cross-reference and commentary for 13:11-12 is Paul's similar words in I Thes 5:4-10.
- C. If we take the above interpretation, the emphasis is that generation, so how do we apply the verses?
 - 1. If we understand the fabulous events of that apostolic generation, we appreciate our position.
 - 2. Anything said of that early and initial generation should be even truer of us older converts.
- D. Do you know the time? If you cannot boast even of tomorrow, when is it time to live God's will?
- E. More about the gospel day ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/prophesy/gospel-millennium/sermon.php>.
- F. More of the gospel rest (Heb 3-4) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/exposition/hebrews/sermon.php>.
- G. More of the great mystery of godliness ... www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/mystery-of-godliness.pdf.

That now it is high time to awake out of sleep.

- A. Recall Paul's mandate for how Christians should live introducing this practical section (12:1-2).
- B. With the gospel bursting upon the world and making great inroads into the Roman Empire, it was time for believers at Rome and in every church then and now to reject carnality and slothfulness.
 - 1. As God progresses through dispensations of dealing with men, there is more expected of men.
 - 2. With the greatest age of grace in Christ then present, there was no allowance for spiritual sloth.
 - 3. As God progresses through dispensations of dealing with men, Christ's coming draws closer.
 - 4. With the coming of Christ closer than at conversion, it should prompt every believer to activity.
 - 5. Every day deeper into the gospel era of the last days we are one day closer to Christ's coming.
 - 6. The rule of godliness is that our degree of accountability is the degree of privilege we enjoy.
- C. There are other verses to this matter of awaking from sleep (I Cor 15:34; Eph 5:14; I Thess 5:4-8).
- D. Every aspect of time, the key of this verse, is more pressing upon us than any previous generation.

For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

- A. How can we be slothful or sleep any longer? We are in the last time and His bright coming nears!
 - 1. The salvation now nearer is the final phase of salvation, when we shall be with God in heaven.
 - 2. Death is nearer to every believer than when he believed, but it is not usually called a salvation.
- B. There is a salvation coming that is nearer to every believer, the final phase of salvation (Rom 8:23).
 - 1. Though 2000 years away to Paul, the last dispensation and an imminent view allows the words.
 - 2. Consider these other verses using *salvation* for Jesus Christ's coming (I Pet 1:5; I Thes 5:8-10).
 - 3. Other verses use other terms for it (John 5:28-29; Rom 8:29-30 9:23; I Thess 4:17; Rev 21:27).
 - 4. It is in this sense that Paul did not consider himself saved yet ... only closer than at conversion!
- C. The coming of Christ should affect our lives (Tit 2:11-14; I Pet 1:13-16; II Pet 3:10-14; I Jn 3:1-3).
 - 1. If you knew the second coming of Christ would occur within the hour, how would you live?
 - 2. If you knew death and meeting Jesus Christ was only an hour away, how would you live?
- D. There is more involved in this verse and the next one than the months or years since conversion, so see above for the related gospel day or dispensation closely connected to Jesus Christ's return.

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.

The night is far spent.

- A. Even a casual reader knows there is a metaphor here – a simple night of 12 hours is not the issue.
- B. Times of ignorance God had winked at were over; He now commanded repentance (Act 17:30-31).
 - 1. Jesus and Paul quoted Isaiah about the *year, time, and day* of the gospel (Lu 4:19; II Cor 6:2).
 - 2. Paul called this period of time *To Day* with the gospel rest depending on faith (Hebrews 3:13).
 - 3. According to John, "Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth" (I John 2:8).
 - 4. Even Peter addressed those of his nation to reject the excesses of the Gentiles (I Peter 4:1-5).
 - 5. See the comments and verses for day and night above in 13:11 for the words, *knowing the time*.
- C. The night of pagan darkness was ending and the gospel day coming, so they should live carefully.
 - 1. These transitional words describe a transitional generation from pagan darkness to gospel light.
 - 2. The night of total darkness around the earth was ending, as Gentiles believed in all the world.

The day is at hand.

- A. The gospel of Jesus was at that time breaching the gates of hell and introducing light to all men.
 - 1. These transitional words describe a generation moving from pagan darkness to gospel light.
 - 2. The words are not night disappearing or day arriving fully due to the transitional generation.

- B. Isaiah wrote of such a day in many places, but one example should show the sunrise (Is 60:1-3).
- C. Paul wrote very similar words describing the Christian day for the Thessalonians (I Thess 5:4-10).
- D. The second coming of Jesus Christ was not at hand, as Paul clarified elsewhere (II Thess 2:1-3).

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness.

- A. Let us leave the ignorant sins of the heathen and put on the armor of holiness and righteousness.
 1. Can you get upset enough about sins, since God hates sins, to cast them off and out of your life?
 2. Do you know what *mortify* means, as in Col 3:5 and Rom 8:13? It means to put sins to death!
- B. The next verse lists Gentile sins the gospel day could not allow (Eph 4:17-19; 5:6-13; I Pet 4:1-5).
- C. As in other places, Christians are to put off things, here the works of darkness, so as to please God.
 1. They should *lay aside* every weight and the sin easily besetting them for witnesses (Heb 12:1).
 2. They must *lay apart* all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness for the word of God (Jas 1:21).
 3. They must *put off* the old man and the works of the flesh from him (Ephesians 4:22; Col 3:8-9).
 4. They must *crucify* the flesh with its affections and lusts and bear their cross (Ga 5:24; Lu 9:23).

And let us put on the armour of light.

- A. The armor of light is the required Christian conduct in godliness acceptable for the gospel day.
 1. The Christian conduct is opposite of the works of darkness we cast off and the list following.
 2. Armor is the *word* because of the war we are in with Satan, the world, and our fleshly lusts.
 3. We are war against the lusts of our flesh, and it is foolish to think we can relax (I Peter 2:11).
 4. Paul gave a lengthy list and description of Christian armor and for what purpose (Eph 6:10-18).
- B. If you do not have the holiness of the gospel day, you have no evidence of eternal life (Heb 12:14).
- C. The truth in Jesus is far different than the darkness of Gentile sinfulness (Eph 4:17-19 cp 4:20-24).

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

Let us walk honestly, as in the day.

- A. Christians should live honest lives in the day of the gospel, rejecting the world's many varied sins.
 1. Honesty here is not mere truthfulness, for the opposing clauses make it holy, righteous living.
 2. Honesty here is the consistency, faithfulness, integrity of living as the children of day and light.
 3. The sins here describe the lascivious lives of pagans – very similar to many Christians today.
- B. We are in the gospel day of Jesus Christ, and our sober lives should match it well (I Thess 5:4-10).

Not in rioting and drunkenness.

- A. *Rioting* is intemperate, indulgent, excessive, and wanton actions in pleasure and entertainment.
 1. **Riot.** To live in a wanton, dissipated, or unrestrained manner; to revel; to indulge to excess in something. 2. To indulge (oneself) to the full in some pleasure or recreation.
 2. Other related or similar Bible terms are reveling, banqueting, gluttony, surfeiting, etc.
 3. Bible passages touching on this sin: Pr 23:20-21; Luke 15:13,30; Tit 1:6; I Pet 4:4; II Pet 2:13.
 4. This is the modern craze for eating, drinking, partying, recreation, and amusement. The sin is in the excess, where restraint is lost and rules of sober and moderate conduct are compromised.
 5. This is lustful living for pleasure in a loose and wild way, rather than a grave and sober approach to life based on self-denial and temperance in light of eternal glory and judgment.
- B. *Drunkenness* should be understood literally here as intoxication by the excessive use of alcohol.
 1. While drunkenness is sometimes used metaphorically, the other sins here are intended literally.
 2. Drunkenness is a reduction of awareness, discipline, gravity, sobriety, the opposite of saints!

3. While God does allow and even commend wine and strong drink, He hates any drunkenness.
4. No Christian that has been called out of darkness into Christ's light should ever be a drunkard.

Not in chambering and wantonness.

- A. *Chambering* is today's sexual partying, sexual indulgence, lewdness, luxury, or effeminate living.
 1. **Chambering.** Sexual indulgence, lewdness; luxury, effeminacy; *esp.* in a chamber for it.
 2. Other related or similar Bible terms are concupiscence, fornication, lasciviousness, banqueting.
 3. Bible passages touching on this sin: Prov 7:6-23; 29:3; Jeremiah 5:7; Judges 16:1; Luke 15:30.
 4. Modern unchaperoned dating, nightclubs, school parties, dance halls, Spring Break, making out in the back seat of a car, and "partying" are modern counterparts to chambering of Paul's day.
- B. *Wantonness* is undisciplined and rebellious living, especially in lascivious and lewd sexual matters.
 1. **Wanton.** Undisciplined, ungoverned; not amenable to control, unmanageable, rebellious. 2. Lascivious, unchaste, lewd.
 2. Other related or similar Bible terms are lasciviousness, lewdness, selfwill, temperance.
 3. Bible passages touching on this sin: Isaiah 3:16; I Timothy 5:11; James 5:5.
 4. Here is excessive care, desire, and activity in sensual and sexual things. It is preoccupation with appearance, pleasure, recreation, sleep, amusement, and other sensual activities. It is an undisciplined approach to life to satisfy any desire or lust asking for satisfaction.

Not in strife and envying.

- A. *Strife* is unnecessary and proud fighting and grudges causing differences, disrespect, and division.
 1. **Strife.** The action of striving together or contending in opposition; a condition of antagonism, enmity, or discord; contention, dispute.
 2. Other related or similar Bible terms are variance, debate, bitterness, answering again, envy, and emulation.
 3. Bible passages touching on this sin: Proverbs 15:18; 18:6; James 3:14-16; II Timothy 2:23; I Corinthians 3:3; Luke 22:24; Genesis 13:7; Numbers 27:14.
 4. Strife is fighting, and Christians are called to be peacemakers with all men. You should hate bitterness, conflict, disputes, debate, arguments, hatred, envy, and variance. A godly man will do all he can to avoid fights and to make peace between others. Unity in one mind is God's command for the churches of Jesus Christ (I Cor 1:10).
- B. *Envying* is negative and resentful feelings and thoughts toward others, often due to their blessings.
 1. **Envy.** Malignant or hostile feeling; ill-will, malice, enmity. Active evil, harm, mischief. The feeling of mortification and ill-will occasioned by the contemplation of superior advantages possessed by another.
 2. Other related or similar Bible terms are bitterness, emulation, strife.
 3. Bible passages touching on this sin: Gal 5:19-21; Jas 3:14-16; Pr 27:4; Titus 3:3; Acts 17:5; 13:45; 7:9; Gen 30:1; Rom 12:15; I Cor 12:26.
 4. Bitterness, jealousy, or grudges are often signs of this sin. Backbiting, talebearing, slandering, or whispering can also be indications of an underlying spirit of envy for the advantage of another. The antidote is to rejoice and be thankful for the superiority or blessings of another. Sincerely praise and serve those you resent in order to kill this sin.

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

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.

- A. The inspired disjunctive *but* sets this positive command in opposition to the negatives just made.
- B. Let the world and most Christians greedily pursue fleshly lusts (Eph 4:17-19); let us be different.
- C. Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ should be thoroughly understood as the climax of this section.
 - 1. It is not putting Him on your back for a ride; it is not putting a record on about Him; it is not putting on a WWJD bracelet or bumper sticker; it is not telling everyone you are a Christian.
 - 2. It is taking His lifestyle and conduct as the goal for your own and emulating Him in every way.
 - 3. The first step in putting on Jesus Christ is baptism in Him and a new life (Gal 3:27; Ro 6:1-6).
 - 4. Paul used similar reasoning with others about putting on the new man (Ep 4:17-24; Col 3:5-13).
 - 5. There are many ways in which you can put on Jesus Christ, so you must learn much about Him.
 - 6. Submission to abuse of authority over you is putting on the Lord Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:18-23).
 - 7. Jesus Christ did all things looking at the eternal reward for obedient perseverance (Heb 12:1-3).
 - 8. Answer temptations with Bible and do not allow your flesh to reason with you (Luke 4:1-11).
 - 9. Let the spirit, character, and conduct of Paul motivate and direct you to follow Christ, for his life and conduct in the churches of Christ were by the spirit and character of Christ (I Co 11:1).
 - 10. Jesus was a man of prayer, those putting Him on will also emulate His praying, which will keep them and arm them from all sorts of temptations and opportunities for sin (Luke 6:12; 9:28).
- D. Are you a Christian? Were you baptized? What does He mean to you? Do others see Him in you?
 - 1. If you are baptized as a Christian, your life should be totally wrapped up in Him (Col 3:1-4).
 - 2. Paul gloried greatly in the cross of Jesus Christ that divorced him from the world (Gal 6:14).
 - 3. You should be crucified with Christ and living a life in this world by Christ in you (Gal 2:20).
 - 4. Forget WWJD, because Jesus would condemn such ostentatious self-righteousness (Matt 23:5).
 - 5. But is Jesus Lord of your life in Bible reading, prayer, friends, movies, and music? Get real!
 - 6. Is Jesus the Lord of your life? ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/christ/he-is-lord-of-all/sermon.php>.
- E. This is the first and positive step to being a great Christian this context and whole section demand.

And make not provision for the flesh.

- A. This is the second and negative step to being a great Christian this context and whole section teach.
- B. The mandate of not being conformed to the world is to avoid things that create opportunity to sin.
 - 1. The flesh's powerful lusts will overwhelm you, if you allow any sinful inputs or opportunities.
 - 2. We are war against our sinful lusts, and we cannot and dare not allow them any room to rise up.
 - 3. You must get away from any friends, music, movies, place, job, or hobby tempting you to sin.
 - 4. You must starve your flesh by not feeding it; you must neuter it by denying any opportunities.
- C. So strict was Jesus concerning this matter that He taught mutilation, which metaphor means cutting out and cutting off any dear and precious things tempting us to sin (Matthew 5:29-30).
 - 1. David should have been at war instead of home, and he should not have left his bed for a walk!
 - 2. Solomon warned his son to stay away from the strange woman, which should lead men to change jobs, drive different routes, cancel magazines, turn off the television (Pr 5:8; 6:25; 7:8).
 - 3. Television is the most devilish device in a home providing for the flesh, including the carnality of spectator sports that fill a viewer's mind with fleshly matter (Ps 101:3; Rom 1:32; Phil 4:8).

To fulfil the lusts thereof.

- A. Your lusts are very powerful and will take advantage of any freedom or opportunity you give them.
- B. According to James, sin begins with the thoughts of it in the fleshly heart, which quickly result in enticing you to the sin, which when played out in sinful action brings death (James 1:14-15).
- C. Do not wonder if you have sinful lusts. You have them. You must deny them opportunity to sin.
- D. You cannot get drunk away from wine; you cannot commit adultery away from the desired one.
- E. It is hard for the lust of the eyes to work following Psalm 101:3. Flee youthful lusts (II Tim 2:22).