

# ROMANS

THE GRACE OF GOD: A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

## Submission to the Authorities

• Romans 13 : 1 - 7 •

Week 22

### DEVOTION

After a pivotal election, this week's passage offers a timely and relevant word from God. It highlights the role of government, His sovereignty over earthly leadership, and how we, as transformed believers, are called to engage with authority in a way that reflects our faith and trust in Him.

Paul emphasizes the importance of submitting to governing authorities, recognizing that all authority is ultimately established by God. Though human governments are imperfect, His sovereignty remains unchanged. Submission can be challenging, especially when policies seem unjust or leaders fail to uphold righteousness. Yet Paul makes it clear that submission is not about allegiance to human rulers but recognition of God's supreme authority. Since all leadership falls under His control, even flawed governmental systems operate within His divine plan. No matter how chaotic or unjust circumstances may appear, submitting to authority is an act of trust in God's overarching power and purpose.

Paul was not being idealistic. He wrote to the Roman Christians who lived under an oppressive and pagan government. Persecution under Emperor Nero was marked by extreme brutality and cruelty. Yet Paul urged believers to submit, respect and obey governing authorities. He warned that resisting lawful authority was akin to resisting God's order as leaders serve as His instruments to promote justice, maintain order, and deter evil.

However, submission does not mean blind obedience to corruption or injustice. It is not about endorsing every governmental action but about respecting the position and role that God has ordained. Throughout Scripture and history, faithful believers have courageously defied authorities by proclaiming the gospel and standing for righteousness despite threats, persecution, and even death.

As followers of Christ, respecting lawful authority, fulfilling our civic responsibilities, and living honorably demonstrate our trust in God's divine plan. When confronted with unjust leadership, believers are called to respond with wisdom, prayer, and righteous advocacy rather than rebellion.

Monday

**Read: Romans 13:1 - 2; 1 Peter 2:13 - 17**

**Be Subject to Authority.** The Greek word "hupotassō" translated as "be subject" or "submit", originally carried a military connotation, meaning to arrange troop divisions in proper order. In this context, submission involves recognizing one's place within an established structure and respecting the rank and authority of others.

1. Why should Christians be subject to governing authorities?
2. What makes submission to authorities difficult?
3. How does God's sovereignty over earthly authorities bring comfort and assurance in political uncertainty?

## Tuesday

**Read: Romans 13:1 - 5; Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17**

**God's Servant.** "for he is God's servant for your good." – Romans 13:4

Even the most oppressive and unjust rulers serve within God's sovereign plan. Pharaoh, who brutally enslaved the Israelites and resisted God's command through Moses, was used by God to fulfill His greater purpose. Despite Pharaoh's defiance, God raised him to power to display His glory and proclaim His name throughout the earth (Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17).

- 1.How can rulers be God's servants for good, even when they act unjustly?
- 2.Who are we ultimately rebelling against when we resist governing authorities?
- 3.Beyond political leaders, who holds authority in your life? Consider the leadership in your workplace, home, school, or community. Are there areas where submission feels difficult? How can prayer help you discern a faithful and humble response?

## Wednesday

**Read: Romans 13:1 - 5; Daniel 6:1-10; Acts 15:17-29; Exodus 1:15-21**

**Submission vs Absolute Obedience.** Unquestioning obedience to earthly rulers has never been God's command. While believers are called to respect and submit to governing authorities, submission does not mean forsaking God's higher law. Daniel demonstrated this truth when he continued to pray despite the king's decree forbidding it (Daniel 6:1-10).

- 1.When is disobedience justified?  
Personal inconvenience, cost, or preference are not valid reasons to disregard the law. However, Scripture provides clear examples of faithful believers who disobeyed earthly rulers when their commands contradicted God's will:  
**a.Evangelism.** Read Acts 15:17-29. Peter and the apostles were repeatedly arrested for preaching the gospel. Despite being ordered to stop, they boldly declared "We must obey God rather than men."  
**b.Christian Morality.** Read Exodus 1:15-21. The Hebrew midwives defied Pharaoh's decree and spared the lives of Israelite baby boys, choosing righteousness over fear.
- 2.How can believers ensure their submission to earthly authorities does not conflict with their allegiance to God?

## Thursday

**Read: Romans 13:6 - 7; Matthew 22:21**

**Civic Responsibilities.** Submitting to governing authorities involves fulfilling our civic duties, including paying taxes and showing respect and honor to those in leadership. As believers, we are called to engage responsibly with the systems God has allowed to exist, demonstrating integrity in how we contribute to society.

- 1.Why do we pay taxes, and what should our attitude be?
- 2.How can we practically show respect and honor to those in authority today?

## Friday

**Read: 1 Timothy 2:1 - 2**

**Pray for those in Authority:** Today, let's dedicate time to prayer—lifting up those in authority and seeking God's wisdom for ourselves.

- 1.**Worship** – Begin by praising God and expressing gratitude for the authority figures in your life, even if it's challenging. Trust that God is working through them for His purposes.
- 2.**Intercede for Leaders** – Pray for those in leadership, whether in government, the workplace, or your community. Ask God to grant them wisdom, justice, and discernment in their decisions (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
- 3.**Personal Submission** – Ask the Lord to help you submit to leadership with wisdom and humility. Pray for courage to trust in His sovereignty and divine plan, even when circumstances feel uncertain.
- 4.**Righteous Response to Injustice** – If facing unjust leadership, seek guidance from Scripture and godly counsel. Pray for discernment in standing firm in righteousness while maintaining a spirit of honor. May this time of prayer strengthen your faith and deepen your trust in God's sovereign hand.