

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Romans

A New Life

Lesson #17: Submitting to Authority

INTRODUCTION

Why is it difficult for some to submit to those in authority?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read Romans 13: 1-7

Note: Civil government was considered evil in Paul's day. Nero was the Roman emperor. "Submit" was a military term used to describe chain of command. Government (not the church) has been given the power of the sword (force) which ideally is used for righteousness. Verse 4 is the foundation of the "just war" theory, that all wars are evil but not everyone's involvement in war is evil. The war of aggression is seen as a violation of the prohibition against murder. Ex 20:13 Defensive war is OK.

1. What does Paul mean by "everyone" in verse #1? What is God's view of authority and those who exercise it?
2. What is a Christian to do concerning authority? **Matt 22:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13-17; 1 Tim 2:1-2**
3. How does spiritual authority (the church) compare to civil authority? Authority at work?
4. When is it appropriate to resist authority or disobey an order? **Acts 5:27-29**
5. Since Christians are supposed to pay taxes, is it appropriate that they influence how those taxes are spent to ensure that Christian principles are executed? If so, how?
6. How do you resolve the dissonance between a leader's gay agenda and the Christian world view?
7. What are some practical ways to be a good witness by submitting to those in authority?
8. What are some practical ways to exercise authority?

Read Romans 13: 8-14

Note: Salvation can be considered past, present and future. Paul is referring to the time (hour) in the future when our salvation will be complete by the Second Coming. The present age is considered night since it precedes the day.

9. How does Paul's concept of love differ from what's normally seen on TV?
10. Why is "love" a debt that can never be paid? Vs 8
11. As a Christian, we are given a picture of how we should or shouldn't live. Why is it difficult even though we know the answer? What is Paul's solution? Vs 14
12. Thinking back over this chapter, how do you need to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ"?

APPLICATION

Pray for those in authority over you. Ask God to give you the grace and strength to submit to them in the proper way?

This passage at the end of chapter 13 (Vv 12-14) was used by God to awaken the soul of one of his greatest saints. Augustine, in his youth, had rejected the Christian faith taught to him by his mother, and as a young man in his early twenties, gave himself to a wanton life of licentiousness. He fathered illegitimate children and turned himself over to sensuous pursuits and riotous living. On one occasion, he picked up the Scriptures and the page opened to the end of the thirteenth chapter of Romans. His eyes fell upon this passage. He was convicted of his sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, and he became a Christian.¹

¹ Sproul, R. C. (1994). *The Gospel of God: An Exposition of Romans* (231). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.