

## Romans Chapter 13: (9 – 21)

It is a very practical chapter. It is basically going to work out practically how you put into your life, the theology which you have learned and it is not quite so simple. There is no formula to it. A lot of it is wisdom informed by scripture.

We are going to see how the gospel changes the way we related to the world, how it changes the way we relate to government, how we relate to each other and how we relate to the times in which we live. So the way it relate to government first.

**1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.**

**2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.**

**3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,**

**4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.**

The first thing that we see the gospel commands us to be subject to which means we live under the submission of governing authorities. That is the main proposition. If we have been transformed by the gospel then we are subject to governing authorities.

This means that actually that in the whole world there is no authority, every authority that we are under whether government or quasi government or whatever it is actually there are some authority structure within society that all the authority structure is instituted by God. During time of Paul Nero was the governor. Whenever he wanted to have a party, he need party lights, he will grab a bunch of Christians, string them up on the tree and light them up literally and that is called Nero and we are asked to obey and subject to Nero. Here it is astounding that you could have a person like Nero who fiddle while Rome burns and he does not really care, murders everybody including his own family members and yet we are subject ourselves to him. The reason is that no authority except from God and those exist in authority are instituted by God. So we are actually looking at the government of the day is actually instituted by God. So therefore if you resist the authority you are resisting God. I am asking you to subject to the government of the day, not the party of the day. There is a difference between the government and the party. The only place in the world where there is no difference between the government and party is North Korea and China. So here we actually have rulers derived authority. So we actually have to submit ourselves to authority because the authority comes from God directly. If we look at Daniel chapter 4. Daniel is that prophet who was brought into exile into Babylon and he lived under many kings, Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 4:17 The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.'

This means kingship, leadership, prime minister-ship of a country is actually given by God. Sometime we question, why God gave it to that person but there it is because we are all sinful. If we look at Isaiah. He lived about 150 years before the fall of Babylon, about 605 BC and he lived during time of Judah and he predicted that Judah will fall one day and it will fall to the Babylonians and the Babylonians will take over, the people were taken to the exile. They will be punished for their sin of idolatry and he wrote this about 150 years prior and these are the words that he wrote.

Isaiah 44:24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself, 25 who frustrates the signs of liars and makes fools of diviners, ....

28 who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'"

Isaiah 150 years before the fall of Babylon predicts that after the exile somebody will come and allow the Israelites to build back the city of Jerusalem.

Cyrus the great was a Mede and he combined the Median and Persian Empire together and one day actually Daniel writes about it in Daniel chapter 5. His son called Belshazzar, having a bit of a party, he takes the ornaments, the goblets, the holy instruments from the temple which his father and great grandfather Nebuchadnezzar has stolen and he had not touched. This guy takes it and he pours wine into it and he drinks of it. He really defiled these ornaments in their presence of idols. So he used God's ornaments to defile and to worship idols. The moment he did that a hand appears out of the blue and the hand writes with the words, "number, weight and judged divided" and Daniel was called and he actually explained the prophesy. Your days are numbered, you have been weighed, you will be cast down and you will be divided.

Nobody can actually enter Babylon; Babylon walls are 327 feet tall, 87 feet wide, can drive three chariots. So he is not bothered he actually has a party that night. In that party he invites 1000 nobles and then this things come out and he actually shitted in his pants when it came it, he loosen his loins and it said to him that you will be judged and what the Medo-Persians were doing, Cyrus, they diverted the river. When they diverted the river the water goes down and the troops went under the water here and entered through the gates and they took Babylon that night itself without a single shot being fired. It is fantastic and then Cyrus the Great comes into the city of Babylon and imagine Daniel there shows him the Book of Isaiah and his name was on it, 150-year-old document and he reads to him this document.

Isa 45:1 Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed:

2 "I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron,

3 I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

4 For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me.

Here is God showing that he is sovereign God of the world when he chooses a non-Christian king in order to return Jacob back to Jerusalem because right after that if we look at Ezra chapter 1 he actually institutes this ply that all Israelites should go back into Jerusalem, it is amazing. The prophecy was written 150 years beforehand. Proverbs says,

21:1 The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.

Nebuchadnezzar his grandfather was actually sent to be mad like an animal out in the fields. After seven years he regained his consciousness because he was proud and this is what he says,

Daniel 4:36 At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me.

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

When you go to heaven one day you might actually see Nebuchadnezzar. God showed that he also love the people of Babylon. He also loved the king of Babylon and had a personal encounter with him. So this goes to show us that God is the one who establishes our authority. Because of sinfulness of man everybody sins, everybody lies, everybody go and steal something. We are all human and sinful. You are thinking that if God institutes a ruler he must be just, he must be honest. No, God uses these authorities in his time for his purposes and they don't have to be just. One other reason is given that we should submit ourselves to authority even though they are not that great but they are instituted by God.

Even though what sort of government we got it is the only one you got. In this evil world we still need sinful human beings to enforce some order in the sinful world and by enlarge if you don't do anything bad you will be okay. We don't exclude the fact that there could be evil people within government as well.

The third thing is that rulers dispense judgment on God's behalf for he is the servant of God. just imaging you have no government and all the people will be going mad, they will be killing people, doing all sort of bad things, you still need government to execute authority.

The fourth reason

5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.

7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

So it is fair because the authorities do the job and basically it is fair for us to obey them.

Mark chapter 12:17 Jesus teaches us how to straddle the world between spiritual life in church as well as living under authority in the world and they caught him one day because they were asking him difficult question to catch him. They asked him, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?"

During Jesus time the government of the day was a Roman governor and they are actually under Roman rule and they had to pay taxes. The taxes are paid in these coins which is a picture of Caesar. If you pay these coins you are actually deemed to be disloyal to your own Jewish people because you are giving the tax to foreign government. So therefore if Jesus says you pay your money then they would have condemn him. If Jesus says, don't pay then he will be under sedition because you are telling people not to pay. So they trap him nicely and then Jesus says very clever,

Mar 12:16 And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's."

Mar 12:17 Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.

Which means in the world today there is the physical world, there is law, there is finance and we are to subject to government and give back to government. We are made in the image of God, so therefore you have to give back to God what belongs to God; you give back to Caesar what belongs to him.

Some additional biblical data are

1-Peter 2 a very useful text talks about providing a good witness.

13 Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme,

14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.

15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.

When you do good, when you obey people will praise Christians. They are not the one out there causing trouble.

16 Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

We have to act in the same way as being submissive to authority.

### Titus 3

1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,

2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

### Titus 2

9 Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative,

10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

### 1 Peter 2:18

18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.

19 For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.

20 For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.

21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

The reason why we obey unjust people even though they will unjustly punish us is because we are reflecting what Jesus life was. Jesus was totally just but he got capital punishment and he suffered and so therefore we are Christians, we are called to do the same thing. We will have the same capital punishment or unjust treatment and our reflection of faith is depending

on by entrusting himself to the one who judges. That means actually even though we are judged unjustly we actually trust upon the lord directly. He is our ultimate judge. The world is not just, just because you are holy and you walk the right path does not mean that you are going to get a good deal but the things that through this we entrust ourselves to the Lord who judges justly, he is the one. That is the real game.

Pope went to Poland and there he met a number of people because the Polish government, the Nazi government took over Poland sometime ago and they send everybody to Auschwitz and then there were Jews who ran away and tried to hide and they pass the law, anybody found hiding the Jews will be killed and they actually killed people. 50,000 Polish people died protecting Jews and many of them were killed, many of them were not killed. This is when you have the State Laws. Do you obey the law, do you turn the Jew in.

Nuremberg Trial, they caught all the Nazis and then everybody in the Nazi war mechanism said, I was only obeying orders. The Bible tell me to subject to your authority. The Nuremberg Trial judges concluded, “but gentleman is that not a law obey our laws”. So the state passes an unjust law that causes you to go against your conscious and your humanity, whatever happens in the end, you cannot say the state made me do it, because there is a law above the law and when the war was over they will hang you. No uncertain terms.

Thomas Jefferson, “*when injustice becomes law resistance becomes duty*”.

A young woman couple of years ago she was held in contempt because she worked in the National Registration of Marriages in Kentucky. A gay couple applied to get married, she refused to sign it. Because she refused to sign it she was put in jail. She said, “*I cannot obey this law because this is going against God’s law*”.

Is it right as a Christian for us to march against the government?

László Tőkés was a reformed protestant pastor who lived in Romania. Sometime ago when Romania was a communist country, it was ruled by Nicholas Ceaușescu and his wife. Totalitarian regime, arbitrary incarceration, torture, all was there. He actually stood up in church one day and says, we should bring him down. This man is a dictator, he should be brought down. Government reacted, sacked him, and tried to take his flat away, take his church away. His church members lined up outside his church to protect him. Then the security forces opened fire, killed 100 and 1000s of people who protected him. As a result of that the entire nation rose up, Nicholas Ceaușescu went down to the ground. He gets a helicopter to try to escape, they caught him and they shot him because one man stood up, László Tőkés and turned the whole country and became democratic after that.

Nataliya Dmytruk was a sign language operator for the Ukrainian TV station and they had election between Yushchenko who led the Orange Revolution and Yanukovych who is basically the corrupted president at that time and they announced that Yanukovych have won but actually it was a lie and what she was doing when they were actually saying it, Yanukovych has won Dmytruk stood at the back and signed opposite, he did not, he lost, he is bluffing you and she says this is probably my last broadcast, bye bye. Then she wore

Orange. As a result of that all the people inside the office also became brave and then all this grew up people got very bold in Ukraine and in the end the election commission said there was cheating involved and they null the entire election, they had another election, the Russians tried to poison Yushchenko but he won and the people were given a new chance. Because of one woman was bold enough to disobey the law in that sense.

Romans 13 when actually applied to your life, it is scary, it is not straightforward, it will involve your whole life and you will pay daily for it. Why the church was largely nonpolitical. The church is largely nonpolitical simply because as Time Keller said, *all the fights that they have whether political parties or war, it is just rearranging the furniture*. They are all sinful, either side both sinful, you don't get sucked in because they are already arranging the furniture. Whether it is United States government or whether it is China government or whatever government, they are all guided by the spirit of the evil one. You get involve and stand up for issues where there is passive resistance, there is passive disobedience, there is promotion of good, you standup for issues but you don't get yourself sucked into particular cause because you don't know the guy goes up there and then starts to misbehave then you will have a problem too. So everybody has got an angel, so we should stand up for righteousness.

How the gospel changes the way we relate to others.

**8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.**

**9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."**

**10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**

So here it is very straightforward. Jesus Christ is the end of the law. Jesus Christ is fulfillment of the law and basically why do we have to obey the law, we obey the law simply because Israel was saved by God from Egypt. God gives them a law in order to reflect his personality, who he is. We are saved by the cross through faith. God gives us Jesus Christ, the embodiment of the law, he fulfilled the law for us and so therefore we are there to obey the law, because we are saved not in order to be saved.

The law is basically two things you love, the heart of the human being is love, and heart of God is love. You love God, commandment 1-4 and then you love men by honoring your parents, you don't steal, you don't rob. It is not a romantic kind of love. It is a very practical kind of love. So the context here is very simple, love is a mark of faith. Chapter 12, love overcomes evil with good, submission state, now we love our neighbors, pay taxes to whom is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed, owed to nobody anything. So the Christian obligation is to love state and love your community. So in state you love them by giving them taxes and obedience, the community by social change.

About 400 years after Christ or just under that a Christian monk, Telemachus went to Rome and he saw the gladiators inside the Colosseum. They were killing each other, he was really upset. He jumped in between them and told them to stop in the name of Christ, they never stopped and instead killed him. The crowd looks on and people shook their head, turned around and walk out. That was the last time A.D. 400 any gladiators fought in the Colosseum. One Christian one day stood up and it made a change.

Christianity changed the face of the society, the Bible gave human rights to this world, movement, association, free speech, religion all that comes from human right, we are made in the image of God are Christian ideas. Christianity lifted up the rights of woman. The change in society is incurred by Christians. Slavery was overturned due to Christians. Education from Martin Luther and reformers and then they started universities all over the world. In the USA 122 of 123 colonial colleges were all Christian. This is how when you start to love your neighbor and apply the principle of Christ, it changes the entire face of the world. Hospitals also started by Christians. We have biblical capitalism where we actually have the idea of servant-hood.

Magna Carta signed in 1215 A.D., King John, a very naughty fellow simply killing people and whacking people because he is the king, so the nobles got very upset, the church got involved, they started a Magna Carta. The Magna Carta is the single most important document that actually tells us that the king is beneath the law. There are respects of individual freedoms against arbitrary authority of the despot. From the Magna Carta 800 years later on you have got the American Revolution, no taxation without representation because of individual rights. So because of the individual rights you have got the equality of man, rule of law, moral absolute sovereign authority of God, checks and balances. In American government they have got three branches, got check and balances. So the Bible is the only place where you actually tells you how human beings should live and work and people who applied it have changed the face of the world. They are Christians.

Lastly, how the gospel changes the way we live.

After hearing all of these things we are all going to be a part of it. In every part of the world that you touch now is like this because of our forebears, all the Christians live beforehand, now it is our turn, how do we live.

**11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.**

**12 The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.**

**13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.**

**14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.**



What he is saying is that there are basically three metaphors.

1. Night is gone.
2. Day is coming.
3. Uniform.

Night represents sin and death, day represents salvation when Christ will come again.

The time has come. There are two words in Greek, Chronos and Kairos. Chronos refers to time in terms of how many minutes. Kairos refers to season and so basically time is chronological time, Kairos is season. The word that Paul uses here is Kairos that means the season is coming, the time is coming, the season is coming for you to wake up from sleep, and salvation is here. So it is not dark, it is not black anymore, it is not completely light but you are in between dawn and so therefore it is very urgent, you got to get up, wake up. So the rationale, Christ is coming back again. So we need to fear God as he is coming back. Again the action is to put off all the activities of the night, sexual immorality, orgies, drunkenness, and quarrelling, jealous, sensuality and then put on the character of Christ, the behavior of Christ, the love of Christ.

We are going to change this world simply by being yourself, simply by being someone called to God's righteousness, to live righteous life and to love God and to love others as yourself, you will change the world.