



STUDY GUIDE

RIGHT WITH GOD 9.20.2015

[set up]

What are some of the things you appreciate about the authorities in your life?

What are some things you dislike about living under the authorities in your life?

Do you have a tendency toward rebellion or compliance regarding how you respond to authority?

[digging deeper]

Pastor Warren Wiersbe said, “God established human government because mankind is sinful and must have some kind of authority over us.” Discuss this statement’s validity. Do you agree or disagree? What authority do you struggle the most to submit to?

Review Romans 13:1-7. Read it slowly and reflect carefully upon it.

¹Let 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. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For 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, ⁴for 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. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay 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.

How is Paul’s instruction in 13:1-7 ultimately an act of faith?

What is Paul’s theological reason for submitting (being subject) to civil authorities?

Read Titus 3:1, 1 Peter 2:13-17, and Daniel 2:21. Discuss these scriptures.

Titus 3:1 – “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,”

1 Peter 2:13-17 - 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. 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.

Daniel 2:21 - He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings;

The inscription on Jesus’ cross read, “King of the Jews.” How do you think Christians could live in an Empire with an emperor that was worshiped as a god?

Review the two classic stories of Jesus interacting with civil authorities found in Matthew 22 and John 18, 19. What are the lessons for us from encounters?

[living it out]

How do we respond to the demands of the times we now live in?

First, **we refuse to abandon the public square.** We continue to make the case for freedom of conscience, and make sure our children understand this debate, as well. We must teach them that, as Martin Luther King put it, “One has a moral responsibility to disobey an unjust law,” because “an unjust law is no law at all.”

Second, when we’re attacked, **we respond and help fellow Christians** do the same - folks like Jack Phillips, a Colorado baker who the government says must sacrifice his First Amendment religious rights to the demand of a homosexual couple that he bake them a “wedding cake.”

And finally, **pray for our country** - especially for our churches to rise up in defense of the truth. As Chuck Colson and others put it in the Manhattan Declaration, we must fully and ungrudgingly render to Caesar what is Caesar’s. But under no circumstances will we render to Caesar what is God’s.