

Romans 13:1-2

Higher Powers Ordained of God

1. Overcoming Evil

- a. *Rom 12 – Our reasonable service as members one of another*
- b. Rom 12:21 – “overcome evil with good” ... but how? Bake him a cake? (Jack Phillips)
- c. Grace says bless, don’t do evil, in honesty, live in peace, avenge not, give place to wrath
- d. Grace does not teach us to be doormats for evil - Titus 2:11-12, 3:1, 1 Tim 2:2-3
- e. *Rom 13 – Our reasonable service living with higher powers.*
- f. Rom 13 not about overcoming evil rulers, but how to overcome evil with good.
- g. Before the Lord’s return, the place of wrath toward evil is with God ordained rulers.

2. 13:1 – Let Every Soul Be Subject

- a. Every soul does not leave anyone out – Rom 2:1-2, 2:6, 3:4, 14:12
- b. The evil should be brought into subjection for goodness sake - 13:2-3, 4
- c. The good should be subject for the Lord’s sake - 12:19, 13:1, 4, 5
- d. The rulers are subject as wielding power ordained of God - Pro 8:15, Rom 9:17, Eph 1:21
- e. Members of His Body are subject – as Christ, taking the form of a servant - Phi 2:6-8
- f. We are at liberty, dead to the law, seated in heaven, yet with a duty here - Gal 5:1, 13
- g. Peter’s advice to pilgrims - 1 Pet 2:11-16; we are ambassadors (our king is in exile)
- h. If our task is to install the kingdom, then we should declare “King Jesus!” and die fighting.
- i. As ambassadors of peace, submitting to higher powers important for our ministry - 2 Cor 5
- j. Paul was subject for conscience sake not doing wrong - Acts 25:10-11

3. 13:1 – Higher Powers

- a. The highest power → The Lord Jesus Christ above all power - Col 1:15-18, 2:9-10
 - i. We are in Christ, but are subject to him in all things - Eph 5:22-24, 6:1, 5-8
 - ii. All power comes from its source, all subject to God (right, true, good) - 1 Cor 11:3
- b. “*there is no power but of God*” - A claim of power over another must be derived from God.
 - i. The power is respected as from God, not a person, policy, or evil that usurps it.
 - ii. The power does not come from the governed (Rousseau thought men were good)
 - iii. Power may be held by an unbeliever, but it must be right - 1 Tim 6:1, Acts 18:14-15
- c. “*the powers that be*” - There are different ordained powers, each with a place & purpose.
 - i. Powers are limited by Jurisdiction ~*def.* The right to exercise authority. Mk 12:17
 - ii. In apostleship, Peter of circumcision – Gal 2:7-8; Paul the masterbuilder - 1Co 3:10
 - iii. In marriage, husbands have responsibility from God - Eph 5:25-27
 - iv. In the family, parents are given authority from the Lord - Eph 6:1
 - v. In the church, bishops and elders take responsibility - 1Ti 3:1,4, 15, 5:17, Acts 20:29
 - vi. In civil government, rulers are called ministers of God for good - Rom 13:4
 - vii. Purpose of family (nurture/provision), church (grace/truth), civil (peace/justice)
- d. “*ordained of God*” – Every power was ordained for good not evil – Rom 12:21
 - i. When people with power do evil, it is not what God ordained (ex. Abusive husbands, wicked parents, false teachers, thieves, evil politicians)

4. 13:2 – Damnation for Resisting

- a. *“An evil man seeks only rebellion”* - Prov 17:11
- b. This is written for an evil man, not a righteous man - 1 Tim 1:9-11
- c. *“Whosoever ... ”* – No one is above God. Do good before men and God.
- d. *“therefore resisteth the power.... ”* - Not the wicked person, policy, or usurped purpose.
- e. Damn ~*def.* To condemn, to decide to be wrong, bad, worthy of punishment, reprobate
- f. Don't resist the power that is from God, it is provided by God to give place to good/wrath.
- g. *Conclusion:* It's a bad thing to avenge yourself, but good if higher powers perform justice.