

Romans 13:2-5

Rulers and Workers of Evil

1. 13:2 – Resisting the Power

- a. This portion of Paul's epistle is tremendously helpful if not proof texted or corrected.
- b. Remember, this about the 'place for wrath' and overcoming evil with good - Rom 12:19, 21
- c. *"Whosoever ..."* - No one is above God. The power of God over all (even rulers).
- d. *"therefore resisteth the power...."* - The power of God over evil (not an evil person/policy)
 - i. This prevents ambassadors from undermining or refusing to subject to authority.
- e. *"resisteth the ordinance of God"* - God ordained higher powers for order/justice/peace.
 - i. Damn ~*def.* To condemn, to decide to be wrong, bad, worthy of punish, reprobate
 - ii. God provides the power to give place to wrath (good) for the joy of all - Pro 29:2
 - iii. We are all accountable to God's judgment – Rom 2:16, 14:12, 1 Cor 4:5, 1Tim 5:24
- f. *Conclusion:* It's a bad thing to avenge yourself, but good if higher powers perform justice.

2. 13:3 – A Terror to Evil

- a. *"rulers are not a terror to good works"* - This defines a ruler's responsibility (not history)
 - i. Wars always promoted as doing good (not b/c they do), but b/c of God's ordinance.
 - ii. God never instructs us to obey a terrorist of good (thus, war protests)
- b. *"wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?"* - Want to live in peace? Do good. Not evil.
 - i. Who defines good? God defines the good (not ignorant/wicked men) Mt 10:28
 - ii. i.e. You should only fear the ruler if you do evil. (You can't rebel and expect praise)
- c. The other side of the ruler's responsibility is to praise to those that do good.
 - i. These rulers do not present the power of God unto salvation – Rom 1:16
 - ii. Note: The rulers are to praise good works, but not given the duty to perform them.

3. 13:4 – The Sword of Wrath

- a. *"he is the minister of God to thee for good"* – This power is for your good, not evil.
- b. *"But if thou do evil, be afraid"* - This written for evil men, not righteous man - 1 Tim 1:9-11
- c. *"beareth not the sword in vain"* - God empowers to use it: Gen 9:6, De 25:1, Lev 24:17
 - i. Paul speaks not a new thing, but ancient wisdom - Ecc 8:2-5, Prov 14:35
 - ii. Who does not bear the sword? Church (peace) and Christ (grace)...later Rev 19:21
- d. Notice the ruler does not bear the spoon to provide, nor the scripture to preach.
 - i. (Note: some make sword Scripture, but it is not used it to execute wrath today)

4. 13:5 – Reasons to be Subject

- a. 1st, your service is that of a member of the body of Christ, an ambassador (ch. 12)
 - i. 2nd, God ordained higher powers; they are an ordinance of God - 12:19, 13:1-2
 - ii. 3rd, He is God's minister for good, against evil - 13:3
 - iii. 4th, He bears a sword to revenge, execute wrath upon evil - 13:4
- b. *"not only for wrath sake"* – Not simply to avoid wrath (which unjust rulers use to control)
 - i. Weak, fearful, accommodating of evil will do anything to avoid wrath - Rev 21:8
- c. *"for conscience sake"* – Subjection is one done with a pure/strong/clear conscience.
 - i. The important reason that will keep us from doing evil in the name of subjection.
 - ii. As followers of God, we are subject to goodness, righteousness, justice - Eph 5:5-13
- d. With no clear conscience, we do not serve God in truth - 1Cor 8:12, 1Tim 1:5,19, 3:9, 4:2
 - i. How to have a clear conscience – hold the truth, do your duty, do good, not evil.