

January 18th, 2026

Reframing Authority
Romans 13:1-7

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.
Romans 13:1 (NIV)

OVERVIEW

➤ A Call for Submission. (vv. 1-2)

Views On Submission vs. Defiance:

- 1. Qualified Submission:** Christians submit, but never when obedience means defying God's moral will.
- 2. Descriptive, Not Prescriptive Submission:** Paul's words are written specifically to believers in Rome at the time but aren't meant to be a manifesto for how to respond to all authority everywhere.
- 3. Subversive Irony:** By calling rulers "servants of God," (v. 4) Paul is quietly dethroning Caesar.
- 4. Already-Not Yet Submission:** Earthly governments are a temporary system—a restraint for sin until the true King returns.

- God's Design for Government (vv. 2-4)
- Superiority of the Conscience (v. 5)
- An Attitude of Honor (vv. 6-7)

*The Gospel reframes authority.
It reveals how followers of Jesus are to live under authority
without losing their allegiance to Christ.*

1. Be subject to authority but remember your _____ . Rom 13:1; John 19:11
2. Before you take a position, allow the gospel to _____ . Rom 13:5-7

Conforming Conscience to the Gospel:

- The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7)
- The Fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-24)
- Listen to those who think differently than you.

3. Trust _____ above every other. Rom 13:1

Because we believe that the sharing of our ideas and beliefs enhances our spiritual growth in ways teaching alone cannot - we encourage you to join a small group at Sunridge and discuss some of the following questions.

Paul says Romans 13 isn't about politics but about posture. How would you describe a *Christlike posture* toward authority today? Where do you personally find it hardest to live with that posture?

Paul writes that "there is no authority except that which God has established." How does it change your understanding of this passage to realize that God *ordains the institution of authority* rather than *endorsing every ruler's actions*?

In verse 5, Paul says we obey "as a matter of conscience." What does it mean for your conscience to be *shaped by the gospel* rather than by fear, politics, or culture? Can you think of a time when your conscience led you to act differently because of your faith?

Britt said, "*The second my allegiance to any person or political party makes me justify what Jesus would condemn, I've traded the gospel for an idol.*" What are some ways believers today might blur the line between faith and political allegiance? How can we guard against that in our own hearts?

Paul calls believers to honor authority while remembering that "every flag will one day fall, but the kingdom of Jesus will stand forever." How does that truth reframe how you approach civic life, leadership, and current events? What practical step could you take this week to embody that eternal perspective?



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*The Gospel reframes authority.
It reveals how followers of Jesus are to live under authority
without losing their allegiance to Christ.*

1. Be subject to authority but remember your highest allegiance. Rom 13:1; John 19:11
2. Before you take a position, allow the gospel to shape your conscience. Rom 13:5-7

Conforming Conscience to the Gospel:

- The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7)
- The Fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-24)
- Listen to those who think differently than you.

3. Trust God's throne above every other. Rom 13:1

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