



**Romans 13: 1-14**  
**Submit To Authorities**

February 22, 2026

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## Romans 13:1-7

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*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. <sup>2</sup> Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. <sup>3</sup> For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. <sup>4</sup> For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. <sup>6</sup> This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. <sup>7</sup> Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.*

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## Romans 13:1

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### Historical Context

- Israel was under Roman rule (military occupation) during Paul's time.
- Rome demanded absolute loyalty. Rebellion means mass execution.
- Rome appointed the high priest.
- Paying tribute to Rome means theological submission to Pagan rule.
- Jewish rebellion in 68 AD and 135 AD resulted in the sacking of Jerusalem, burning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple, millions of Jewish killed, enslaved, and the Jewish diaspora. Rome rename the Jewish homeland as Syria Palestine after 135 AD so no one would associate the region with the Jews.

## Romans 13:1-5

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Considering the historical context when Paul wrote Romans, what do you think is the purpose for these verses?

Paul was concerned for the small Christian communities that is under increasing scrutiny by Rome. He did not want to see Christians revolting. Especially Christian anarchists.

## Romans 13:1-5

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God's intention for government.

## Romans 13:1-5

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Ignoring the historical context and true meaning of these verses, people have misused them to justify their selfish actions that resulted in egregious historical consequences.

How do you think people have misused these verses to justify themselves?

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## Some Major Historical Misuse Of Romans 13

Slavery in  
the West

Nazi  
Germany

Apartheid in  
South Africa

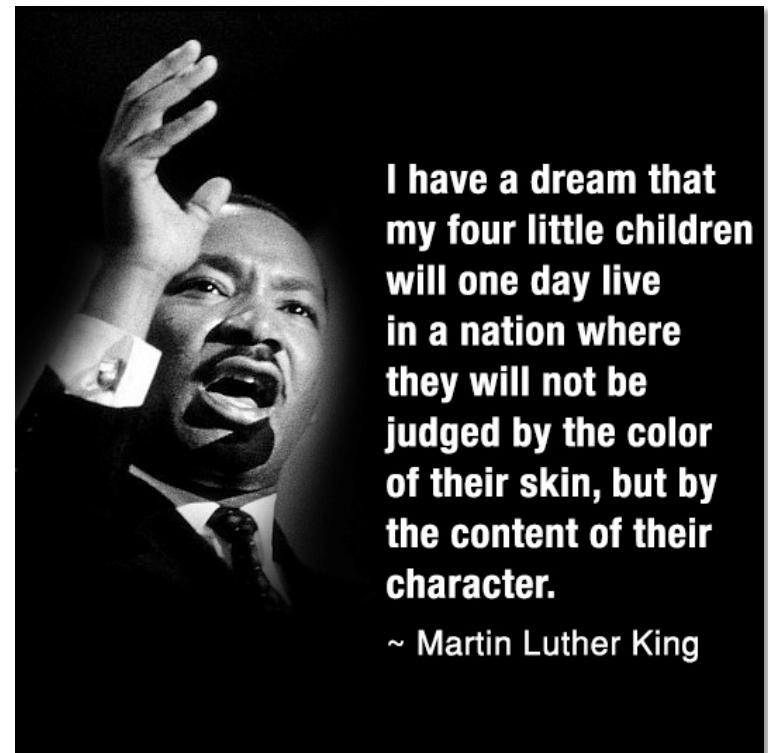
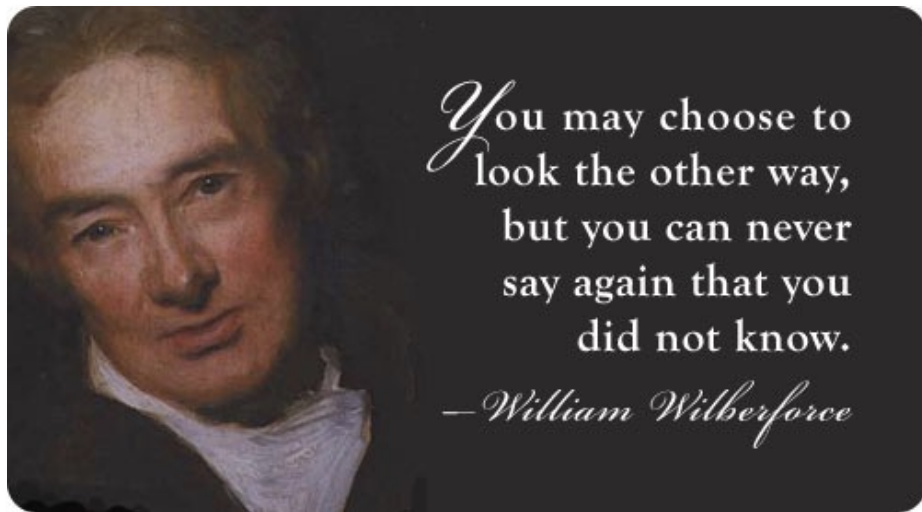
Misused Romans 13 To Mean/Justify  
Unlimited Obedience To Authority

Are Christians  
Allowed To  
Disagree With  
Our  
Government



# Christians That Fought For What Was Right In God's Eye

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### **Acts 4:19-20**

*<sup>19</sup> But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! <sup>20</sup> As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."*

### **1 Peter 2:19-21**

*<sup>19</sup> For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. <sup>20</sup> But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. <sup>21</sup> To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.*

### **Acts 5:29**

*Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"*

### **Philippians 1:12-14**

*<sup>12</sup> Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup> As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.*

# Major Domestic Issues In Our Time

No Matter Which Side You Are  
On With Different Issues—  
Remember God Is Sovereign

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Civil Rights  
Movement

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Legalization of Gay  
Marriages

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Transgender Rights

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Immigration Issues



June 26, 2015

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# Should A Government That Is No Longer Fulfilling Its Purpose In Restraining Evil And Promoting Good Be Overthrown?

God does not want a bunch of Christian anarchists. On the contrary, He wants us to obey our governments and be good citizens.

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- Jeroboam rebelled against the united kingdoms of Solomon and the 10 tribes. But Jeroboam was given direct revelation from God.
- God used evil governments as well as good ones for His purposes. Ex. Philistines, Assyria, Babylon
- Even after David was already anointed king of Israel and Saul was no longer a fit king, David still honored Saul as God's anointed and waited for God to remove Saul although he had more than one opportunity to kill Saul.

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## Would Reading Romans 12:17-21 Change How You Feel About Romans 13?

### **Romans 12:17-21**

*<sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> On the contrary:*

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;*

*if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.*

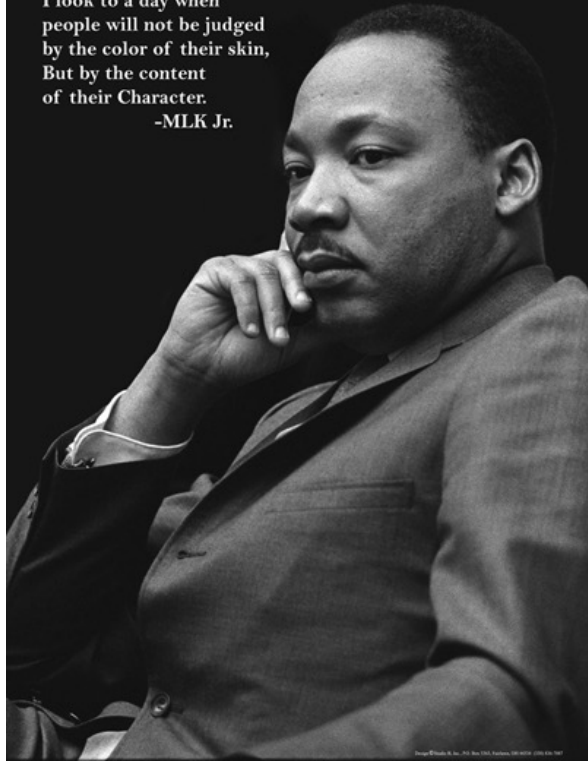
*In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

*<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

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## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

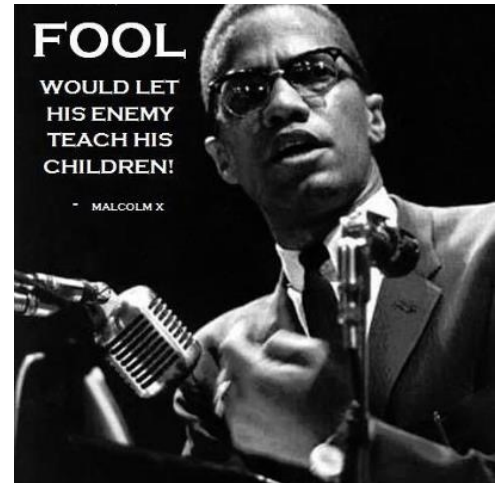
I look to a day when  
people will not be judged  
by the color of their skin,  
But by the content  
of their Character.  
-MLK Jr.



## FOOL

WOULD LET  
HIS ENEMY  
TEACH HIS  
CHILDREN!

- MALCOLM X



America must be burned!  
America is no good at all.  
— Louis Farrakhan



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## A Practical illustration Paul used to encourage Christians to obey Rome?

Paying Tribute to Roman means submitting to Pagan Rule over God's land.

### **Romans 13: 6-7**

*<sup>6</sup> This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. <sup>7</sup> Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.*



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# Understanding Romans 13: 1-7 Its Historical Context Can Help Us Navigate Today's Issues

## **Error 1: Absolute Submission**

“Government is always right because God appointed it.”

This ignores:

- Jesus' execution
- Nero's persecution
- Revelation's critique of empire

## **Error 2: Automatic Rebellion**

Because Rome was bad, Christian should resist all authority.

This ignores:

- Paul's call to peaceful conduct
  - The church's non-violent witness
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**With A Transformed Mind Comes  
New Attitudes—one That Shows  
Respect To The Government And  
Our Civil Responsibilities**

## Romans 13:8-10

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<sup>8</sup> Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to **love** one another, for whoever **loves** others has **fulfilled the law**. <sup>9</sup> The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “**Love** your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup> **Love** does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore **love** is **the fulfillment of the law**.

Paul is in the middle of talking about being good citizens. Now he brings love and the Law, when Christians are no longer under the Law. Why?

### Romans 12: 9-10, 14, 17, 21

<sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

<sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil.

<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

How do the commandments used in these verses reinforce the focus of “Love your neighbor as yourself”?



What Sorts Of Action  
Communicate Love  
To You?



**With A Transformed Mind Comes  
New Attitudes—love others as  
yourself**

## Romans 13:11-14

<sup>11</sup> And **do** this, understanding **the present time**: The **hour** has already come for you to **wake up** from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup> **The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.** So let us **put aside** the deeds of darkness and **put on** the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us **behave** decently, as in the **daytime**, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> Rather, **clothe** yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and **do not think** about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

Look at all the words and phrases that have to do with time in these verses. What other type of words or phrases do you see being repeated many times?

Paul is calling us to ACTION. Why?

Do you get the sense of urgency Paul is conveying? There is no time to waste in changing our behavior.

## Romans 13:11-14

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### Do's ✓

- ✓ Put on the armor of light
- ✓ Behave decently
- ✓ Clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus

### Don'ts ✗

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| X Deeds of darkness | X Dissension                              |
| X Carousing         | X Jealousy                                |
| X Drunkenness       | X Do not gratify the desires of the flesh |
| X Sexual immorality |   |
| X Debauchery        |   |



**With A Transformed Mind Comes  
New Lifestyle—one that is  
diligent and not self-gratification**