



Our relationship to **Authority**

Intro: Romans 13,1-7

In Romans 13, 1-7, Paul gives some comprehensive instructions on what our attitude should be toward authorities in Government. These principles are not applicable just for governing authorities. They are also appropriate for every authority that we deal with. We will cover many of these principles in this teaching.

Principles in Romans 13,1-7:

Let 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.

Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

For 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,

for 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.

Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.

Pay 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.

1) We are to be submitted to our authorities.

2) Authorities are established by God

3) If we resist authority, we resist God and incur judgment.

4) We do not have to fear authority.

5) Rules are there for our good.

5) We are to render to our authorities respect and what is due them.

Four Areas of Authority

- Family
- Workplace
- Church Life
- Government



The Idea of Authority

The idea of authority is that someone rules. Someone decides. Someone has the final say in the matter. We do not all sit around and take a vote to see how to do everything. That is not to say that some decisions are not made by a body of leaders. But they as leaders make the decisions. The rest of us follow.



Authority is *God's* idea! It originated with Him. He is the supreme Authority. He establishes authorities here upon the earth to organize and guide our affairs.



Authorities are established by God

Authorities are established by God



The first principle we want to look at is that all authorities are established by God. Romans 13,1, says “there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.” This is important to know. Whoever the authority is in our life, they are in a large way representative of God. Consider the following Scriptures.

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

Daniel 4,32: the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.

1 Peter 2, 13 & 14: Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.

Jeremiah 27,5-6: “It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me. Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant.”

Notice that in Jeremiah 27:6, God called Nebuchadnezzar “my servant.” Nebuchadnezzar was hardly a godly man. However, he was selected and installed by God as the ruler in the Babylonian Empire.

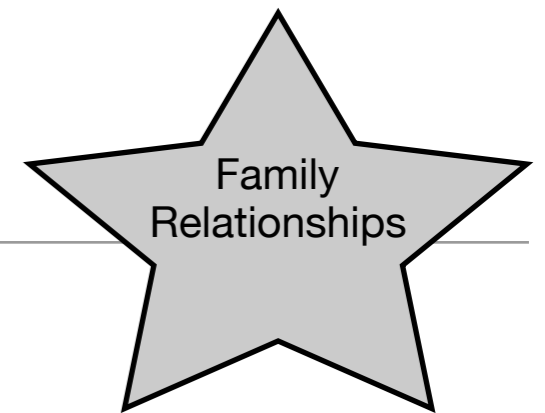
If we can receive the understanding that authorities are God given, then we can react to them in a godly manner.

Attitudes towards those in Authority

As Christians, it is very important for us to display and maintain godly attitudes towards those who have authority over us. The following pages share some of the attitudes God expects us to have in the four different areas of authority.



Authority in the Family



There are many Scriptures that specify what kind of attitudes we should have toward our authorities in our families. Here are just a few:

Attitude	Relationship	Reference
*Submit as to the Lord	Wife to Husband	Ephesians 5,22
Respect	Wife to Husband	Ephesians 5,33
Obey	Children to Parents	Ephesians 6,1
Honor	Children to Parents	Ephesians 6,2

*If there was ever any Scripture that has been abused in the Bible, this is it! Two observations are important. First of all, the word "submit" is in the middle tense in the Greek. It basically means, "submit yourself." It does not mean, "husband, make your wives submit," or "husbands rule over your wives." It was written to the wives, not the husbands. Secondly, the commandment to the husbands is far greater: "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave His life for it." Any discussion about wives submitting to their husbands cannot be held without including the husband's greater responsibility.

Authority in the Workplace



Scripture also addresses attitudes we should have toward our bosses.

Attitude	Reference
Obedient with sincerity	Ephesians 6,5
Working with our heart as to the Lord	Ephesians 6,6-7
With all respect- and not just to the good bosses, but the bad ones as well	1 Peter 2,18
Treat boss worthy of all honor	1 Timothy 6,1
Submissive in everything; well pleasing, not argumentative	Titus 2,9
Not being a people pleaser; working heartily	Colossians 3,22-23

Authority in the Church



We are to also submit to our spiritual leaders.

Attitude

Reference

Obey leaders and submit to them	Hebrews 13,17; 1 Peter 5,6
Hold in double honor, especially those who preach & teach	1 Timothy 5,17
Respect them and esteem them very highly in love	1 Thessalonians 5,12-13
Provide for them financially	1 Corinthians 9,9 & Galatians 6,6
Uphold in prayer	Colossians 4,3 & 2 Thessalonians 3,1
Be an active part of a local body of believers	Hebrews 10,25

Authority in Government



We are to also submit to our government officials.

Attitude

Reference

Obey government leaders	Romans 13,1
Pay the proper amount of taxes	Romans 13,7
Respect & Honor	Romans 13,7 & 1 Peter 2,17
Subject to every human institution	1 Peter 2,13
Uphold them in prayer	1 Timothy 2, 1-3

It is important to learn not to live in fear of the governing authorities. Many needlessly fear those who are in uniform or who are in positions of authority. Authorities are given to us by God and are there for our good. Show them respect and learn to have confidence in their presence.

Submission to Authority is the first step to achieve
His ultimate plan for our lives.

1. Humble yourselves under the Mighty Hand of God

It is extremely important for us to maintain godly attitudes toward those in authority and to stay submitted to them. Peter said submitting ourselves to our leaders was the same thing as submitting ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

Jesus, though he was in the form of God...emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant...**he humbled himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. Philippians 2,5-8

And Jesus consistently maintained a wonderful attitude- even toward the governmental authorities who were crucifying Him, and became our example for us.

Our best example of this is our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, even though He was one with God, humbled Himself to do God's will. He emptied Himself of His godly characteristics and become a servant. He then further humbled Himself, obeying His Father's will for Him, dying upon the cross for our sins.

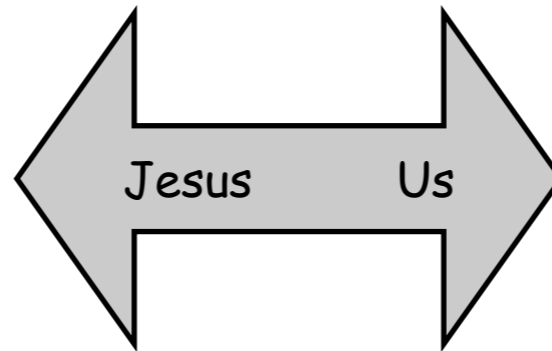
1 Peter 5,5-6: "You who are younger, be subject to the elders...**Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God** so that at the proper time he may exalt you.

To this you have also been called, because Christ also suffered for you, **leaving you an example**, so that you might follow in his steps...When he reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

1 Peter 2,21 & 23

2. That at the proper time He may exalt you!

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.
Philippians 2, 9-11



1 Peter 5,5-6: "You who are younger, be subject to the elders...Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you."

- Because Jesus so humbled Himself under the "mighty hand of God" -by surrendering His will to do His Father's will- and by maintaining a godly attitude in the middle of His great sufferings - God greatly exalted Him.
- And it is just as important for us to submit ourselves, 1st to God, and then to the authorities He has appointed in our lives- parents, teachers, bosses, pastors, government officials and so on- that at the right time, He may raise us up to our appointed place.

How to submit to harsh Leaders

- Separate the Person from the Position
- Trust God. He will bless you for your positive behavior and do what is right for you.



Step 1: Separate the Person from his Position

It is not always easy to submit ourselves and maintain good attitudes with our leaders. For instance, many children were raised by parents who were alcoholics. This can cause a lot of hardship and difficulties in the home. And yet, God tells us that children are to “honor their parents.” How is this possible? How is it possible to give honor and respect to supervisors who mistreat us? To husbands who ignore us? To pastors who disregard our ideas and overlook us? We do this first by separating the Person from his Position.



Step 1: Separate the Person from his Position

David was anointed to become King of all Israel. He was a highly successful warrior, and the people loved him. However, before he became king, he served under King Saul. Saul developed an intense jealousy for David, aware of his popularity and knowing that one day he would take his place. So Saul set out to kill David. David fled and lived in the hills for months. Saul tracked him, intent on killing him.

Two times while Saul was hunting him, David had the opportunity to kill him. And his friends even encouraged him to do so. David refused, and this is what he said:

David could see more than just see the terrible person who was trying to kill him. He saw the position this person had, that of a king. He respected this position, and withheld his hand from striking down the king.

"The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD." 1 Samuel 24,6 (KJV)

Please note! Submission does not mean you have to remain in an abusive situation. Neither do you submit to someone who leads you to sin. While David still honored Saul as king, he did not hang around until Saul killed him.
Use wisdom!

Step 2: Trust God to bless you and to do what is right

God is just and righteous! He rewards everyone for their faithfulness. Instead of taking things into your own hands, and sinning against God and the person, keep your good attitude. God will ultimately bless you for your faithfulness and do what is right for both you and the person you are having difficulty with.

David did not sin against God or Saul by killing the king. And at the right time, Saul died and God exalted David as king. Here is what David told Saul:


"May the Lord judge between me and you, may the Lord avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you." 1 Samuel 24,12

He later told him:

"The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the Lord's anointed. Behold, as your life was precious this day in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the Lord, and may he deliver me out of all tribulation." 1 Samuel 26,2-24

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.
Psalm 37,7-9

Blessings to being submitted to Authority



Children are blessed with a long life	Ephesians 6,2 & 3
Receive God's grace	1 Peter 5,5
Timely promotion from God	1 Peter 5,6, & Philippians 2,9
Approval of authorities	Romans 13,3
Spiritual impartation from leaders	2 Timothy 2,2
Favor & blessings	2 King 4,9-17

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