

Divine Order

Romans 13:1-7 (Part 2)

Introduction

1. Christian responsibility: Fulfilling our role as citizens (13:6-7)
 1. The payment of taxes (13:5-7)
 1. The responsibility of paying taxes (Rom.13:5-7)
 1. Because God has established the authority (His servant) (13:1,2)
 2. Because God requires the government to fulfill a mandate (13:4,6)
 3. Because God has ordained taxes as necessary to finance that mandate (13:4,6)
 4. Because of possible punishment (13:5)
 5. Because of conscience (13:5)
 2. The nature of the calling to whom taxes are paid (13:6)
 1. "Servant" (Rom.13:4)
 2. "Servant" (Rom.13:6; Ezra 7:24; Heb.8:2) ("Ministers of God"-ESV)
 3. Pay what is "due" in taxes (Rom.13:6-7)
 1. The government's responsibility (13:6)
 2. The reason why taxes are due (Rom.13:7a)
 2. Respecting leaders (Rom.13:7b)
2. A summary statement (Matt.22:21)
 1. God's authority
 2. The authority of the state
3. Three principles for the good functioning of society
 1. Rulers: The law sets the limits of authority for rulers and those in positions of authority
 2. Rulers: The law provides rulers with an objective authority for dealing with anarchy and rebellion in society
 3. Society: The law also provides society with an objective basis for disobedience to ungodly laws being promoted by the respective authorities
4. Our problem
 1. We all live in a world of imperfect authority structures
 2. We, who are called to obey God's delegated authorities, are also imperfect
5. How then shall we live? (Biblical directives for guidance)
6. The division of the moral law: The 10 Commandments (Ex.20:1-17; Matt.22:37-40)
7. Responses to the violation of the 10 Commandments under Israel's theocracy, pagan Kings, and the rule of Rome
 1. Examples: Violation of the 1st 4 Commandments which relate to God (to love God) (Ex.20:3-11)
 1. Under the Jewish Theocracy (2Sam.12; 1Kgs.16:29-2Kgs.1)
 2. Under pagan kings

1. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Dan.3:16-18)
2. Daniel (Edict that prayer to be directed to King Darius alone) (Dan.6)

3. Under Rome

1. In Matt.28:19-20, God commands that the gospel be preached
 1. Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:18-20; 5:29)
 2. Apostles before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:29)
 3. Faithfulness to God is not always rewarded with deliverance
Stephen (Acts 7:54-60); Christians (Acts 26:9-11)

2. Emperor worship confronting the early church

2. Examples: Violation of the last 6 commandments ("to love our neighbour") (Ex.20:12-17)

1. Under a pagan Pharaoh in Egypt (Ex.1:15-22)

Pharaoh's call to the midwives to murder the new-born Israelite children (Ex.1:15-22)

1. The Hebrew midwives refused to obey Pharaoh and kill the newborn male children

2. God's response (Ex.1:20,21)

2. Murder: King Herod's command to kill all boys in Bethlehem who were two years old and under (Matt.2:13-18)

3. Application

1. The violation of the 6th Commandment ("You shall not murder") (Ex.20:13)

2. The violation of the 8th commandment in a theocracy ("You shall not steal") (Ex.20:15) (1Kgs.21)

Conclusion

1. Respect authorities which God has placed over us, by being good model citizens
2. No government has the right to command Christians to:
3. When opposing the authorities, we are called upon to operate within the limits of God's revealed law and a conscience informed by the Bible.
4. Opposing evil laws are conducted in a variety of ways
 1. Always in prayer
 2. By making our vote count
 3. By drawing the governments attention to the violation of the law by personal letter, petitions, or peaceful protests (e.g. abortion rally)
 4. By Christians seeking to change evil policies and promote God's law by being in government
And,
 5. In some instances, by refusing to comply with a government order and suffering the consequences
5. The Christian works for temporal justice, knowing that perfect justice is not attainable (Is.9:6-7; Is.11)
6. Jesus and Paul lived under the rule of Rome (Matt.22:17-21;17:24-27; 1Pet.2:13ff)