

Studies In Romans

(Romans 13:1-7)

1. Was it God's design that there be rulers among men?

Yes: *"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same"* (**Romans 13:1-3**).

- Submissiveness is an attribute spiritually minded people should not have a problem with (**Ephesians 5:21**).
- We are to be in subjection to civil authorities (**I Peter 2:13-16** and **Titus 3:1-2**).
- We should not be minded to oppose government in itself (**Jude 8**).
- Having said all of that, we cannot obey men over God (**Acts 5:29**).
- Moreover, we have to understand that our motive in obeying civil authority is not to be pleasers men (**Galatians 1:10**), but to be able to stand before men without offense (**Matthew 17:24-27**).
- Thus, the whole point is, we are to live above reproach (**I Peter 4:12-16**).
- God put authority in the hands of men, some specifically, others through the fact that God allows civil authority (cf. **Daniel 5:18** and **John 19:11**).
- Rulers are supposed to exercise judgment in carnal matters (**Deuteronomy 25:1**).
- Christians, in matters against each other, should not use these civil authorities to settle disputes (**I Corinthians 6:1-8**).

2. Does God approve of rulers executing judgment among men?

Yes: *"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil"* (**Romans 13:3-4**).

- Rulers are SUPPOSED to be against evil (**Proverbs 14:35** and **Proverbs 20:2**).
- Doing good SHOULD keep us out of trouble (**I Peter 3:9-13**).
- HOWEVER, the Lord also tells us that sometimes justice [of men] is not so just (**Matthew 10:16-18** and **Acts 12:1-2**).
- Be mindful that God has given the authority for rulers to execute judgment (**Proverbs 16:14-15**, **Proverbs 20:8**, and **Proverbs 20:26**).

3. Do we need to be in subjection to rulers?

Yes: *“Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake”* (**Romans 13:5**).

- We addressed this already in verses 1-3.
- One additional thought we see here though is that our subjection need not only be for fear of wrath, but also for our own conscience sake (**Acts 24:16, I Peter 2:19-20, and I Peter 3:15-18**).

4. If rulers impose taxes, fines, or fees; must we pay them?

Yes: *“For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour”* (**Romans 13:6-7**).

- Pay taxes and dues (**Luke 20:21-25**).
- Honor and fear (**Proverbs 24:21 and I Peter 2:17**).