

Living Free Under God's Authority Romans 13:1-7

We are to submit to all authority because it is established by God. Romans 13:1

"For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God."

- **Colossians 1:16; Acts 17:26-27; II Samuel 1 and 4**

Recognize the cost of resisting the established authority. Romans 13:2

"Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves"

- **When do you resist?**
- **Exodus 1:15-21; Acts 4:18-20, 5:28-29; Daniel 3:15-18**

Pursue the good that God desires from all authority. Romans 13:4

"... for it is a minister of God to you for good.... for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil."

- **The "good" that God seeks from governing authority:**
 - **Humility of leaders.** Daniel 4:30-37
 - **No unjust laws, do not deny justice or the rights of the needy and poor.** Isaiah 10:1-2
 - **No dishonesty or greed of governing leaders.** Jeremiah 22:13-17
 - **Do not murder innocent lives.** Jeremiah 22:17
- **The "good" God seeks from us:** I Peter 2:13-17; Titus 3:1-2; I Thessalonians 4:11-12; I Timothy 2:1-2

Discern the right thing to do for those in authority. Romans 13:5-7

"Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." (v.7)

- **Matthew 22:18-21**

Digging Deeper

Jesus was being tested by the religious leaders when asked about the role of government and whether taxes should be paid to Caesar. This was His response in Matthew 22:18-21:

“But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, ‘Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax.’ And they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, ‘Whose likeness and inscription is this?’ They said to Him, ‘Caesar’s.’ Then He said to them, ‘Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.’”

In responding to this question, Jesus revealed His great wisdom and offered a perspective for each of us regarding our allegiance to government and our Lord. We should maintain this attitude as we deal with the governing authorities of today. The image of the coin in Jesus’ day reflected the authority of that nation.

Today, we offer all men another coin. It too reflects the authority and image of the One we follow, Jesus Christ. One side of the coin says, **“I am conformed to the image of His Son.”** As you look at that mirrored side, you catch an image of yourself. In Christ, we bear His image to all around us.

The other side states, **“In Christ, I am strong, courageous, loved, holy.”** In the middle is the Jerusalem cross. The Jerusalem Cross is collection of five crosses and the most common interpretations are:

- A combination of the Old Testament teachings (the four Tau Crosses) and the New Testament teachings (the four Greek Crosses)
- The four Gospels or the four directions in which the Word of Christ spread from Jerusalem.
- Five crosses representing the five wounds of Jesus on the cross (small crosses for the hands and feet), and the large central cross for the spear wound in His side.

As you are reminded of what Jesus has done for you, also realize who you are in Him. In Christ you are Strong and Courageous (2 Timothy 1:7), Holy (Romans 12:1-2), and Loved (Romans 8:38-39). In other words, ‘In Christ you are a new creation.’ (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

I pray that all men, and especially fathers, live your lives and love your families out of the incredible and unrelenting power of Jesus Christ, in whom you have all things. On this Father’s Day, please commit to live under God’s authority and bear the image of His Son, which we already possess, with our family, friends and community.



LifeGroup Questions:

1. How should we pray for our governing authorities based on 1 Timothy 2:1-2?
2. What does Titus 3:1-2 and Galatians 6:10 encourage us to do for our community?
3. In what ways have you experienced the spiritual battles from demonic authority in our world. Read Ephesians 6:10-20 for that area we need to defend and be prepared for.
4. Read 1 Peter 2:13-17. What elements of this passage are you participating in? What areas can you be pursuing?
5. What “good” do you see happening in our community based on Romans 13:4? What “evil” needs to be resisted? Pray for guidance on how you can help in these areas.

Next Steps:

1. Pray for those who govern over us. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-2. Consider what good deeds and kindness you can show to your family and community. Read Titus 3:1-2 and Galatians 6:10. Daily renew Christ’s power and His Word in your life to overcome the spiritual authorities that tempt and attack us. Read Ephesians 6:10-11. Evaluate your own life; how 1 Peter 2:13-17 is applied in your life.
2. Consider some community need or nonprofit that is involved in an area of your gift and passion. This will help the “authorities” do the “good” that Paul calls us into from Romans 13. Find local opportunities at calvarylife.org/local
3. Join a LifeGroup to pray for our leaders and be engaged in promoting the “good” and resisting the “evil” in this world. Discover more about LifeGroups and how to get involved at calvarylife.org/lifegroups