

The Book of Romans - Part 41

Today on "It's a Good Life," our study continues in the book of Romans, and I've entitled this series of study, "Exploring the Book of Romans." Today, we're going to pick up with chapter 13 of the book of Romans.

Let me invite you to look at our Website, www.LRWM.org. On the Website, you'll be able to find Bible study helps, and if you've never trusted Christ as your Savior, you'll also be able to find help on there, showing you through the Scriptures how you can know for sure that you're on your way to Heaven.

You know, I've come into contact with individuals throughout my ministry that, when I ask them, "Are you a hundred percent sure that you're on your way to Heaven?" some people say, "Well, I hope so." Well, if that's you today and you just "hope" that you're on your way to Heaven, you can know for sure. And one way you can know that is to go to our Website and there's a place on there that you can go to that will tell you how to make sure, 100% sure, that you are on your way to Heaven. That's www.LRWM.org.

You can also write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. I'll be glad to send to you free of charge information on how you can know for sure you're on your way to Heaven, and also, if you have prayer requests you want to share with me, I'll be glad to take those to the Lord in prayer and share those requests with our Lord for you.

Well, today, in chapter 13 of the book of Romans, we continue our study and, first, just let me give you two objectives in studying this chapter. First, it's to understand our relationship to the government, and then we see it's also to appreciate the importance of love and moral purity. As we start, we want to

look at verses 1-5, beginning with verse 1, and it says: *¹Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* It says "let every soul," in other words, let every person be subject. This means to take one's proper place under those who are in authority. And then we see "unto the higher powers." This means the governing authorities. And "powers that be are ordained of God" means the human government that was instituted by God after the Genesis flood.

Now, the power of human government comes from God. God is the one who established human government. Titus 3:1 says, *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.*

Romans 13:2: *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* Anyone who opposes human government opposes the rule of God and will pay the consequences. Do you ever get a speeding ticket? You paid the consequences. If you've ever done anything and you got caught for it, you've paid the consequence. And that's what that verse is teaching. You're going to pay a consequence.

And verse 3 says, *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.... Do good and you won't have to worry about it is what he's saying here... Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.* It talks about rulers here, for rulers in government are only a threat to those who oppose the government.

And then Paul continues by asking, "If you do evil, why wouldn't you be afraid of the governing authorities? And if you do good, you

will have praise or the approval of those I charge." You also have the approval of God.

Verse 4: *For he is the minister of God...* that's the person who is in charge. That's the police officer, the magistrate, whoever it is... *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.* God's servant in government is there for your good, according to that verse, and if you do wrong, you need to fear because God's servant in the government will punish you.

Verse 5: *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* In other words, you need to obey the law, not only because of punishment, but also because you know right from wrong. You know if you've done wrong. And you need to obey. You need to do what's right.

Verse 6: *For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.* We're to honor God's servants in the government, because they are His servants and serve Him faithfully. I may not agree with everything those in authority in the government say and the things that they do. I don't have to be in agreement with them, but I need to do what they say... that is, unless it conflicts with God... unless it conflicts with what He has said to do. I am to honor those people. I'm to pray for them, pray for their health, pray that they'll make right decisions, and also pray that if they're not saved they will ask Jesus to come into their hearts.

Verse 7: *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.* Give to whom God has set forth as His representatives in government,

everything that is appropriate: establish payments, reverential respect, and honor.

Matthew 22:17-21 says: *Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?* ¹⁸*But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, **Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?*** ¹⁹***Shew me the tribute money.*** *And they brought unto him a penny.* ²⁰*And he saith unto them, **Whose is this image and superscription?*** ²¹*They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, **Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.***

Well, the Lord is teaching us that it is proper to pay taxes; it is proper to pay the people who are governing over us; and although it may bother us to pay taxes and all those things, it is established by God that we are to do such things.

And notice with me verses 8-10 the value of love. ⁸*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.* We pay what is due to whom it is due. And doing that, you will owe no man anything. In other words, very few people can pay for a car, an automobile, with cash. Very few people can pay for a home today with cash. What it means is don't drop behind in your payments to anyone. Don't try to defraud a person out of the money that is due them, but we are to pay for the things that we buy and that we've been allowed to purchase. We're to pay for those things. And it teaches us in verse 8 that when we love another fellow human, that love is a fulfillment of the law of God. In Matthew 22:36-40 it talks about this.

Now in verse 9 of Romans 13, it says, *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Notice verse 8 now, it says, "For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." It goes on talking about love in verse 9. Because of love mentioned in verse 8, we understand that we are not to, first of all, commit adultery, not to kill... this means to murder... not to take something illegally, not to falsely accuse someone, and not to want the property of someone else.

And it goes on to say in verse 9 any other commandments of God that come to mind can be comprehended or summed up when we love others as we love ourselves. And that's pretty straightforward when we think about it.

Galatians 5:16 says this: *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.* Galatians 5:22 says, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.*

Now we look at verse 10 and this starts a section of Scripture of 11-13 that concerns moral purity. Verse 10 says: *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* Now this verse is continuing with the subject of love, and the only way a person can really love is to fulfill the law, and the only way to fulfill the law is through the one who fulfilled the law and that is Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:17 says, *Think not that I am come to destroy the law...* This is Jesus speaking, "I've not come to destroy the law" ... *or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* The only way that we fulfill the law is through Jesus Christ.

And verse 11 continues on by saying, *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.* That means that we need to be aware that we shouldn't walk around slumbering as if we're in a stupor

or something, but we're to be awake. You're to be aware that it is well past the time to wake up. Our salvation, our deliverance, or our rescue is closer than the time when we got saved.

Ephesians 5:14 says, *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.* That's talking not only about a person getting saved, arising from the dead. You're dead in sins and trespasses, but you're made alive through Christ, and even then, you're to wake up after you get saved. Some people just act like they're asleep all the time, and that's not the way it should be.

Believers know God's prophetic program which He has revealed in Scripture. Our salvation is closer. In other words, Jesus is coming for us and whether He comes for us or not, we don't live forever in this body as saved people; so therefore, one way or the other, we're going to be with the Lord soon, and that's what the verse is trying to get through to us, that our salvation is closer. Our deliverance is closer than we might even anticipate.

Romans 13:12 says, *The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.* "The night is far spent" means that the night has advanced and it's far gone; it's almost over. Our salvation is at hand in other words, carrying on the thought from verse 11. *The day is at hand.* "The day," I believe, is speaking of the Rapture, and it's approaching and drawing closer.

Hebrews 10:25 says, *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* The Lord's coming is close. Jesus could come back at any moment for the saved people of this world and for those

people who have died or gone on to be with Him. Their bodies have died but they're with Him now. The Bible says that we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to be with the Lord forever when He says, "Come up hither."

The Rapture is close and I believe that we need to be ready as Christians. In fact, the Bible says there's a crown for those who love His appearing. Do you love His appearing today?

Do you know Jesus as your Savior? If not, ask Him to come into your heart. He'll save you. And if you do know Him, live for Him. Let Him lead you and guide you through your life.

Until the next time, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.