

Romans 13:1 – 15:13

I. Submission to Government (13: 1-7).

A. Gov't is from God.

1. Disobedience to gov't is rebellion against God.
2. Disobedience to gov't leads to judgment.

B. Gov't exists to punish those who do wrong.

1. Doing right relieves us of fear of gov't.
2. Doing right leads to commendation.

C. The authorities are God's servants.

1. Does not bear the sword in vain.
2. Punishes the evildoer.
3. Our conscience – recognizes God's authority.

D. What is owed (cf. Mt. 22:16-17).

1. Taxes (persons and property) (cf. 1 Ti. 5: 17-18).
2. Revenue (goods).
3. Respect (“fear”).
4. Honor.

E. General principle, not casuistic.

1. Obey God rather than man (Ac. 4:19-20; 5:29).
2. Biblical examples of rising up against gov't.
 - a. Judges.
 - b. Athaliah.
3. Founding fathers of America.
 - a. Gov't has responsibilities before God.
 - b. That the people may lead peaceful lives (1 Ti.2:2).

II. The debt of love (13:8-14).

- A. The only debt that is always owed.
- B. Fulfills the second table of the Law (Ex.20).
- C. Difference between loving God and loving neighbor.
 - 1. God – heart, soul, mind, and strength.
 - 2. Neighbor – as ourselves.
- D. The present time = last days.
 - 1. Salvation = glorification.
 - 2. Behave decently.
 - a. Put aside deeds of darkness.
 - b. Clothe ourselves with Christ.

III. Loving fellow believers (14:1 – 15:13).

- A. The church (strong) should accept the weak.
 - 1. Strong are those who understand their freedom in Christ.
 - 2. The weak are those bound by rules, regulations, and laws.
 - 3. Strong tend to hold the weak in contempt.
 - 4. Weak tend to judge the strong.
- B. Judging.
 - 1. The weak are not to judge the strong in disputable matters.
 - 2. We are all accountable to God in moral issues (v.5) (cf. 1 Co.4:6.)
- C. Examples.
 - 1. Special days.
 - 2. Food (meat vs. vegetarians).
 - 3. We live to the Lord, whether in life or in death.

D. Stumbling blocks (13-23).

1. Things that would lead another to sin.
2. To go against his conscience.

E. Do that which leads to peace.

1. Abstain from what you believe is right if it will lead someone to sin by following your example.
2. Keep beliefs between you and God.
3. If the weaker one goes against his conscience, he has sinned.

F. Help our Christian neighbor (15:1-13).

1. Follow the example of Christ.
2. Promotes unity in the church, bringing glory to God.
3. Accept each other.
 - a. As Christ accepted us.
 - b. With all our faults.

G. The God of hope.

1. Gives us joy and peace.
2. Causes us to overflow with hope.