

Romans 13 "Step by Step"

Step by Step is a verse by verse study through the Bible. With this approach we trust that God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, will emphasize specific points and passages to each person; training us in the Word and teaching us how to live with purpose and identity.

Romans 13

V1- Everyone is to be obedient (subject) to the government over them.

This passage is very clear, *the authorities that exist are appointed by God*.

This does not mean that all authorities are godly, but it does declare that God has placed them there.

Reference passages: Daniel 2:21, 4:34, Titus 3:1, 1Peter 2:13-17

V2- Resisting the governmental authorities has consequences. It may be worth it, depending upon your convictions, but Christians do not get a 'pass' when it comes to punishment for illegal civil disobedience.

V3, 4- This is true in a 'design' sense. When you obey the law, you are not worried about being arrested for lawbreaking. We know that it is also true that not all appointed authorities are true to their appointment. In all government types there is risk of corruption.

V5- There are 2 reasons to be compliant with the government where you are; Consequences and conscience. Consequences basically means you comply because you don't want to pay the price of breaking a law. Conscience speaks of an inner 'guide' concerning right and wrong. When we are born again the Holy Spirit strongly influences our conscience, teaching us what is right and wrong according to God's design for our lives. When civil code collides with our God directed conscience we may choose to 'break that law' we are conflicted over. We will still have to pay the consequences as a law-breaker but we will stand before God with a clear conscience.

V6- You pay taxes because government requires it and God appointed human government *Ministers- Servants*. IRS agents are accomplishing God's purpose in government.

V7- *Render-* deliver what is due. Don't cheat on your tax reporting. *Customs-* tolls. *Fear-* reverence, respect. *Honor-* value, honor, dignity.

V8- This is not speaking about financial obligations, rather it is addressing relational opportunity. This is our greatest debt to be paid to others, the debt of love! Remember, we love because He first loved us! His love is within us so that we have the necessary love to pay forward to others!

V9- The "you shall nots" are summed up with "you shall love".

V10- When love is practiced there is no need for most laws!

V11- In light of the last 12 chapters, wake up! *Salvation* speaks of the rescue, safety & deliverance we will experience when Jesus calls us to Him in heaven.

V12- Christians can easily be distracted by the things of this world if we do not keep our mind on Him. The analogy is clear; stumbling in the dark is painful, it takes us off course and it is dangerous. Arm yourself with His light that you may progress even helping others to do likewise. Wake up, look up, straighten up!

V13- Yes, Christians throughout history have gotten off course and practiced these things.

V14- Cast off the dirty garments(v12) and clothe yourself with the garments of your King! Your actions are like clothing, they are an outward expression of who you are. Since you are His, don't try to fit in or give in to the pressures of this world!