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This weeks focus scripture: Romans 13:1-7

This weeks memory challenge:

Romans 13:1 Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings!”

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‡ **How then shall we live?**

In Christ, how we relate to GOD *Romans 12:1-2*

In Christ, how we relate to OTHER BELIEVERS *Romans 12:3-13*

In Christ, how we relate to SOCIETY *Romans 12:14-21*

In Christ, how we relate to GOVERNMENT *Romans 13:1-7*

‡ The context of early imperial Rome

‡ The most important thing

We must see Paul’s ethical teaching through the lens that the most important answer to the question “How shall we live” is for *the sake of the GOSPEL*.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23, 1 Peter 2:11-17, Titus 2, Philippians 3:7-8

‡ What’s not said here...

The essential balance: As Disciples of Jesus, our ultimate authority is GOD!
Acts 5:27-29

‡ What is said to those in *authority*

† What is said to *us*. As disciples of Christ, we agree that:

- We are SUBJECT to the temporal authorities because they are subject to God.
Romans 13:1
- To REBEL against the institutions of authority is to rebel against God.
Romans 13:2
- Government is not only necessary, it is a necessary temporal GOOD.
Romans 13:3-4a
- Subject to God, government has the authority to ENFORCE the law.
Romans 13:4b-5
- And YES, it is our responsibility to honestly pay TAXES.
Romans 13:6-7

† Ambassadors of Life

2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Matthew 22:21

————— ∞ *Study and Reflection* ∞ —————

Day 1. In today's message, Pastor Ethan asserted that a chief motivational concern for Paul (inspired by God) in these ethical teachings is the 'sake of the Gospel.' Or, in a bigger sense, for the sake of God's Glory and God's Kingdom. Read the following passages (and their surrounding contexts), and journal how you see Paul emphasizing this point. Why is this perspective so important, and how does this perspective challenge us in how we *choose to live* as followers of Christ?

1 Corinthians 9:19-23, 1 Peter 2:9-25, Titus 2, Philippians 3:7-14

Day 2. Read through Romans 13:1-7 several times. Then, for each statement outlined below, consider and journal your thoughts on the following questions. This is a passage with great practical implications, implications that need to be wrestled with!

- What questions, objections or limitations come to your mind?
- What is the practical 'takeaway' or application here?
- How does this principle relate to '*the sake of the Gospel?*'
- What specific ethical scenarios does this principle apply to?

- We are subject to the temporal authorities because they are subject to God. *Romans 13:1*
- To rebel against the institutions of authority is to rebel against God. *Romans 13:2*
- Government is not only necessary, it is a necessary temporal Good. *Romans 13:3-4a*
- Subject to God, government has the authority to enforce the law. *Romans 13:4b-5*
- It is our responsibility to honestly pay taxes *Romans 13:6-7*

Day 3. Consider this scenario: Your state government passes a law that compels you to do something you consider unfair or unjust, but doesn't clearly violate your conscience as a believer. How do you respond? Thinking of the current events of our day, what is such a potential situation?

Next, consider the above, but now with an issue that does violate your conscience as a believer. Again, how do you respond? Thinking of the current events of our day, what is such a potential situation?