

## VI. Laws of Divine Establishment and the Royal Family Honor Code: Romans 13:1

### B. Establishment and the Honor Code Romans 13 Outline

The Christian's responsibility to government: Romans 13:1, Romans 13:2, Romans 13:3, Romans 13:4, Romans 13:5, Romans 13:6, Romans 13:7;

The Christian's responsibility to other members of the human race: Romans 13:8, Romans 13:9, Romans 13:10; and

The Christian's responsibility to self: Romans 13:11, Romans 13:12, Romans 13:13, Romans 13:14.

**Romans 13:1** - All mankind: keep on subordinating yourselves to governing authorities. For there is no authority except that which has its source of origin from God; that is, those which do exist have been delegated by God.

This verse begins with an emphasis on Divine Institution #1, human volition.

It is the volition of the human soul which is admonished to submit to human authority.

This means that there is opportunity for revolution. Every human soul is issued a command, the present middle imperative of the verb: *hupotasso* – “to submit, obey, or subject oneself to the authority of another.”

present - Progressive; a state of persistence; consistently submit.

middle - Reflexive; indicates one's self-discipline to live under the authority of others. Once authority is identified and recognized as legitimate, then the person freely submits.

imperative - Command; compliance is expected of the entire human race.

The fact that an imperative mood can be violated indicates that the threat of sedition, anarchy, and revolution constantly lurks in the souls of men.

Christians of the first century were taking the position that if the rulers of the Empire were immoral, then they didn't have to obey the law.

Paul reminds them that whoever is emperor is inconsequential to the believer.

Honor Code Principle #10: Two wrongs do not make a right. Respect those who represent the foundational institutions of an orderly society.

**Romans 12:17** - Never pay back evil for evil. Respect what is honorable in the sight of all mankind.

Order in society can be maintained only when every citizen subordinates himself to authority.

Thus, revolution is not sanctioned by the Bible although it is practiced by men. The futility of revolution is seen in the fact that it always replaces one system of authority with another which is equal to or worse than its predecessor.

*“Once they have undone an old order, revolutionaries proceed to decree a new order-often an order harsher than the order which they had overthrown.” -Russell Kirk, The Roots of American Order*

When Paul wrote Romans 12-13, Nero was the emperor of Rome yet Paul did not recommend his overthrow.

The Christian cannot become involved in the whitewashing of the Devil's world nor can he become overly concerned about its problems.

Why? Because those problems which cannot be solved by means of establishment truth, the Gospel, or by doctrine are problems which cannot be solved.

The Christian's duty is to separate the leader's character and personality from his authority and office.

The President's character and personality are not the issue because his authority resides in the fact that he is president. Honor the king! (1 Peter 2:17)

This same rationale can be stated for any person who is in a duly appointed position of authority. Some examples:

The husband's character and personality is not the issue because his authority resides in the fact that he is husband. (Ephesians 5:22, Ephesians 5:23)

The same can be said of parents, Ephesians 6:2, Ephesians 6:3 and employers, Colossians 3:22.

Divine sanction of human authorities is revealed in the next sentence of verse 1:

**Romans 13:1b** - For there is no authority except that which has its source of origin from God.

This is a negative way of stating that all positions of establishment authority originate from the source of God.

The final statement confirms that those humans who hold those positions of authority are only permitted to do so by divine permission.

**Romans 13:1c** - that is, those which do exist have been delegated by God.

A principle emerges which indicates that there is no position of human authority which derives its power from the people.

Positions of authority are created by God under the four divine institutions and those who fill them obtain their power from the justice of God.

What God has ordained; the believer must accept. He must honor the king, obey the law, and submit to authority.

God does not sponsor revolution although He permits it when duly appointed authorities abuse their authority and their power.

The believer is never permitted this option. The believer must remain committed to the proposition that Pivot Power far exceeds the reach of Political Power.

**Romans 13:1 [CTL]** - All mankind: keep on subordinating yourselves to governing authorities. For there is no authority except that which has its source of origin from God; that is, those which do exist have been delegated by God.

It is here that we paused to examine the question: What are the norms and standards, divine viewpoint, and scale of values to which the Christian is to subscribe regarding the separation of church and state.