

Romans Series

Lesson #141

April 24, 2014

Dean Bible Ministries

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Dr. Robert L. Dean, Jr.

The Intended Role of Government

Romans 13:3–5



Rom. 13:1, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Rom. 13:2, “Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

Rom. 13:3, “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

Rom. 13:4, “For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Rom. 13:5, “Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience’ sake.

Rom. 13:6, “For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing.

Rom. 13:7, “Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.”

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ὑπερέχω
hyperechō

**pres act part fem
plur dat**

**“to excel, exceed,
be better than;
used for ‘higher’
or ‘superior’
authorities.”**

ὑποτάσσω *hypotassō*

**pres mid impera 3
sing**

**“to subject; to
submit”**

ἐξουσία *exousia*

Noun nom fem sing

**“authority, power;
tribunate”**

Habakuk's Lesson on the Rulers God Raised Up

Hab. 1:6–11, “For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, a bitter and hasty nation

...

terrible and dreadful; ... more fierce than evening wolves. ... They all come for violence; ... He commits offense, ascribing this power to his god.”

Dan. 4:17, “This decision is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.”

Romans 13:1, “Let every soul be subject (ὑποτασσέσθω, *hypotasstho*) to the governing authorities ...

Romans 13:4, “for he [a governing authority] is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

Romans 13:5, “Therefore you must be subject (ὑποτάσσεσθαι), not only because of wrath but also for conscience’ sake.”

Rom. 13:2, “Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”

ἀντιτάσσω *antitassō*

**pres mid part masc sing
nom**

“to resist, to oppose”

Rom. 13:2, “Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”

**ἀντιτάσσω *antitassō*
pres mid part masc
sing nom
“to resist, to oppose”**

**ἀνθίστημι
anthistēmi
perf act indic 3
sing
“to resist,
oppose, to stand
against”**

Rom. 13:2, “Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”

διαταγή *diatagē*

dat fem sing

“decree, ordinance”

ἀνθίστημι

anthistēmi

perf act indic 3

sing

“to resist,

oppose, to stand

against”

The Divine Institutions

1. Individual Responsibility

PRE-FALL

2. Marriage

3. Family

**Designed to promote
productivity and advance
civilization**

4. Government, judicial

5. Nations

POST-FALL

Designed to restrain evil

Psa. 82:1, “God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods (*elohim* used for rulers).

Psa. 82:2, “How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality to the wicked? Selah

Psa. 82:3, “Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Psa. 82:4, “Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked.

Psa. 82:5, “They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are unstable.

Psa. 82:6, “I said, ‘You are gods (*elohim* used for rulers), and all of you are children of the Most High.’ ”

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Various Individual *Authorities* Mentioned in Scripture

- **Of Israel's high priest (Acts 23:5).**
- **Of those in charge of the synagogue (Matthew 9:18, 23; Luke 8:41).**
- **Of members of the Sanhedrin (Luke 18:18; 23:13, 35; 24:20).**
- **Of a judge (Luke 12:58).**
- **Of pagan officials (Acts 16:19).**
- **Of demons whose hierarchies resemble human political institutions (Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15).**
- **And as here of political rulers (also 1 Corinthians 2:6, 8; Ephesians 2:2 [NKJV = "prince"]; Revelation 1:5).**

1 Pet. 2:13, “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme,

1 Pet. 2:14, “or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.”

1 Pet. 2:15, “For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—

1 Pet. 2:16, “as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.”

1 Pet. 2:18, “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.”

σκολιός *skolios* “crooked, bent”

1 Pet. 3:1 “Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,”

God's Use of "Unjust" Rulers

- **Isaiah calls Assyria the rod of God's anger, the staff in His hand (Isaiah 10:5).**
- **Later Isaiah calls Cyrus God's anointed (Isaiah 45:1).**
- **And Jeremiah says that Nebuchadnezzar is God's servant (Jeremiah 25:9).**

“In the administration of public justice, the determining of quarrels, the protecting of the innocent, the righting of the wronged, the punishing of offenders, and the preserving of national peace and order, that every man may not do what is right in his own eyes—in these things it is that magistrates act as God’s ministers. As the killing of an inferior magistrate, while he is actually doing his duty, is accounted treason against the prince, so the resisting of any magistrates in the discharge of these duties of their place is the resisting of an ordinance of God.”

~Matthew Henry (1662–1714), Presbyterian Pastor

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