

Part 2 - Powers that be are ordained of God

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In part 1 Paul dealt with what might be called civil responsibilities. The Roman Empire had three tributes: a ground tax which a man had to pay either in cash or in kind, one tenth of all grain, and one fifth of all wine and fruit produced by his ground; an income tax was one percent of a man's income; and a poll tax paid by everyone between fourteen and sixty-five. There were local customs and duties; animal licensing, cart or wagon licensing, road use, entry to bridges, harbors, markets, import and export. Paul insists the Christian must pay his tribute and taxes to the state.

Text: Romans 13: 8-10 ASV

Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

In part 2 Paul deals with private responsibilities. It seems a thing unnecessary to have to say; but some twist the petition of the Lord's Prayer, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors (Matthew 6: 12 ASV), into a reason for claiming absolution from all debts and money obligations. Paul reminded Christians it does not mean an excuse for refusing obligations to our fellow man; it's reason for fulfilling them.

Paul speaks of one debt a man must pay everyday, and yet must go on owing every day. That is the debt of love. The debt of love remains with us permanently and never leaves us. This is a debt we discharge every day and for ever owe. Paul claims if a man honestly seeks to discharge this debt of love, he will automatically keep all the commandments. If he discharges the debt of love, he will not commit

adultery. When two people allow their physical passions to sweep them away, the reason is not that they love each other too much, it is they love each other too little. In real love there is respect and restraint which saves a man from sin. If he discharges the debt of love, he will not kill, for love never seeks to destroy, but always to build up. Love can never hate for love is always kind. Love never seeks to destroy by killing, but always to make a friend. If he discharges the debt of love, he will never steal, for love is more concerned with giving than with getting. If he discharges the debt of love, he will not covet. Covetousness is the inordinate and uncontrolled desire for the forbidden thing, for the thing that ought not be desired, and love cleanses the heart, until that desire is gone.

If love is the mainspring of a man's heart, if his whole life is dominated by love for God and love for his fellow man, he needs no other law, for the law of love makes all other laws unnecessary.

Text: Romans 13: 11-14 ASV

And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Every time the clock ticks you are closer to the Second Coming of Christ. Are you expecting that? Or has the expectation grown dim? No man knows when God will rise and bid him go. Time grows ever shorter, for we are every day nearer that time. Life is still lived in expectation of the crisis moment. We must have all things ready.

Is your heart in distress because of failure in attempts to live a good

life? A man was walking in his garden. He heard a voice say; "Take and read; take and read." It sounded as a child's voice; and he wracked his mind to try and remember any child's game in which the words occurred. He hurried back to the seat where his friend Alypius was sitting, for he had left there a volume of Paul's writings. He snatched it up and read the first passage his eyes fell upon. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. He turned to Alypius with a calm countenance and told him, it finds me. These last verses are forever famous as they are the verses that converted Augustine.

God's word can always find the human heart. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ as a man puts on a garment, and stop living a life in which your first thought is to gratify the desires of Christless human nature.

Paul selects six sins that typify a Christless life:

1. Revelling was a friends accompanying a victor home from games, singing his praises and celebrating triumph as they went. Later it came to mean a noisy band who swept their way through city streets at night, a band of roysterers, which would have been called a rout. It describes the kind of revelry which lowers a man's self and is a disturbance and nuisance to others.
2. Drunkenness was particularly disgraceful to the Greeks, a wine drinking people. The wine they drank was much diluted and even children drank wine. Breakfast consisted of a slice of bread dipped in wine because their water supply was inadequate and dangerous.
3. Chambering means the forbidden bed and brings to mind a man who sets no value on fidelity taking his pleasure when and where he will.
4. Wantonness describes a man who does not care who sees him,

nor cares what they think of him, he has lost his shame.

5. Strife is a spirit born of unbridled competition, desire for place, power, prestige, and hatred of being second place.
6. Jealousy describes a man not content with what he has and when confronted with greater, wishes to attain it.

God speaks to us about our relationship to government and leaders of governments. He tells us to honor our country and its leaders, as well as God. Paul conveys an urgency around the political situation of his day to the Church of God at Rome. He is urging the church to arise from spiritual slumber, telling it is a critical period and unique season. Time has come for the church to wake up.

There really is a struggle in our nation. This has been said for many years. Some of us have been asleep, and we need to wake up. The Church of God in the United States remained quiet over too many moral and social issues. Many in our nation would prefer we remain asleep. They tell us to be silent. We need to stand up for the Word of God. Why? Because the nation is at stake and we are at war over these five truths:

1. **AUTHORITY** God vs. Man. Who is going to be the authority in our United States of America? Which one?
2. **CONTROL** God vs. Satan. Who is going to control these United States of America? It has nothing to do with political parties. It has nothing to do with social issues. It has nothing to do with moral issues. It is a spiritual war.
3. **TRUTH** Bible vs. Opinion. What is truth? It is the Word of God. People's opinion matter but all opinion give way to God's Word.
4. **FUTURE** Revival vs. Ruin. The Church of God in the United States of America has the answer for the nation and nothing else. It is a spiritual war.
5. **ETERNITY** Heaven vs. Hell. The course of our nation is to remind its people and the world for the need of Jesus Christ. Far more than politics and culture hang in the balance.

These truths ought to motivate us to fulfill our mission to reach people for Christ and make disciples of all nations. We ought to do it with greater intensity, with greater internationality, with greater vision than ever before. It is time for the Church of God in the United States to wake up.

Text: John 8: 31-32 ASV

Jesus said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Discipleship begins with belief. The moment a man accepts what Jesus says as truth, when a man accepts all that Jesus says about the love of God, when a man accepts all that Jesus says about the terror of sin, when a man accepts all that Jesus says about the real meaning of life, on that day the man begins to be a disciple of Jesus.

Abiding in Jesus' word involves:

1. Listening to the word. A disciple listens for the voice of Jesus. He will make no decision until he hears what Jesus has to say.
2. Learning from the word. Disciple translates learner. A disciple learns about Jesus. A shut mind ends discipleship.
3. Penetrating into the truth of the word. No one can hear the words of Jesus once and understand their full meaning. We go back to them time and time again; until more and more of the meaning becomes ours.
4. Obeying the word. A disciple constantly obeys, not for academic satisfaction, or for intellectual appreciation, but to find out what God wishes us to do. A disciple learns in order that he may do the truth Jesus has designed for action.

To learn from Jesus is to learn what truth? Jesus enables a disciple to get his scale of values right; discern things that are important and not.

How does truth set a disciple free?

1. It brings freedom from fear. A disciple never walks alone. He walks in the company of Jesus, and in that company fear is gone.
2. It brings freedom from self. A man's greatest enemy is himself. The power and presence of Jesus recreates a man until he is altogether new.
3. It brings freedom from others. A disciple ceases to care what people say thinking only of what God says.
4. It brings freedom from sin. Discipleship breaks chains which bind us to sin enabling us to be the person we ought to be.

If ye love [Jesus], ye will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you (John 14: 15-17 ASV).

My Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Luke 11: 2

I come boldly unto the throne of grace, that I may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4: 16

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

James 5: 16

First of all, I give thanks, for all that are in authority.

I Timothy 2: 1

That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

I Timothy 2: 2

This is good and acceptable in the sight of Elohim our Saviour.

I Timothy 2: 3

May they observe Your statutes and judgments,

II Chronicles 7: 17

and serve no other gods, or worship them.

II Chronicles 7: 19

Whatsoever they do in word or deed, may they do all in the name of
Adhonai Jesus, giving thanks to Elohim and the Father by him.

Colossians 3: 17

Asking all in Jesus name.

John 14: 14

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as in heaven.

Matthew 6: 10

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6: 13