



Portion:

SCRIPTURES

- Romans 13:1-7
- I Peter 4:1-6
- I Timothy 3:1-13; 5:17-18

Title:

IF YOU ASS-U-ME...

- Governing Authorities
- God's Ministers
- Index of Terms

SEED:

"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**." Romans 13:1 NKJV

FRUIT:

"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**." Romans 13:4 NKJV

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S MESSAGE:

Who are the governing authorities to whom you should obey? Unfortunately, traditional Church teachings on the topic totally ignore key stipulations when identifying the rulers to whom you owe allegiance. "He is God's minister to execute His goodness and His judgment." This discriminates and differentiates to whom you ought to subject yourself; it is certainly not just to anyone simply because he holds a position of authority. God is not revealing that every governing authority is of Him and demanding we submit to all of them, without some qualifying factors. However, if you have been following the vast majority of church teachings on the subject, that is exactly what you are being taught to do. Before we blindly agree with the majority, let's take a look at a few key qualifiers.

He is God's minister: He is a servant of God inspired by the Lord to carry out His plan for His people.

He is God's arbiter of what is good: He knows inherently or intrinsically what is right. Anything good originates from God and is empowered by God through faith; nothing and no one can be good otherwise.

He is God's avenger: He is a special representative of God, an advocate, agent or champion of God and defender of His ways. He is a superintendent, administrator, or ambassador carrying God's authority into the earth and exercising judgment on what and who is evil.

He attends continually to God's business: He devotes himself entirely, continuously, and steadfastly to his direct assignment from God.

It should be obvious that Paul is teaching that true authorities are appointed by Yahweh for the good of His people and to champion His cause. And when they are acting in that position, a minister for good, their authority and therefore their rulings are to be considered as if they are from Yahweh. If you don't submit to them, you will bring judgement on yourself as if you are rejecting God. If necessary, Yahweh uses these anointed officials to discipline His people. The choice is simple; do what is good and you will have favor with God and among His leaders; do what is evil, and you should instead be very afraid of them.

Nowhere does God command His people to submit to ungodly rulers when what is being required of them is in violation to God's will. In other words, God is not recommending ungodly obedience as a path to good citizenship. Consider Daniel's response when a decree was signed by the king forbidding prayers to Yahweh. On schedule, Daniel knelt before the Lord three times that day, as was his custom. And what about the disciples when they were ordered to stop speaking and teaching in the name of Jesus? Their response was the exact opposite of subjecting themselves to the governing authorities; "If you believe it is right to listen to you above God, you are dead wrong. We will not cease speaking of the things which we have seen and heard about Christ, because that is what God wants us to do, even if you command otherwise."

When the governing authorities are ruling in an ungodly fashion, they should be ignored, and instead, God's people should submit to His higher authority. God's ministers are attending to the work of God and they are commissioned to hold His people accountable. Give them the honor and respect they are due. And provide for their needs in every way necessary. And finally, do what is right because it is the right thing to do, not because you fear the consequences.

GOVERNING AUTHORITIES

1. Identifying Godly Leaders

A. It may not mean what you think.

(1) Don't Ass-u-me

(a) Leaders Assigned by God

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.**" Romans 13:1 NKJV
2. **[Read Daniel 6]** "Now when Daniel **KNEW THAT THE WRITING WAS SIGNED**, he went home. And in his upper room, with his **WINDOWS OPEN** toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days." (Daniel 6:10) "So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, **DOES NOT SHOW DUE REGARD** for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day." Daniel 6:13 NKJV
3. **[Read Acts 4:1-22]** "So they [***the Sanhedrin**] called them and **COMMANDED THEM** not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But **Peter and John** answered and said

to them, **“WHETHER IT IS RIGHT IN THE SIGHT OF GOD TO LISTEN TO YOU MORE THAN TO GOD, YOU JUDGE. FOR WE CANNOT BUT SPEAK THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD.”** Acts 4:18-20 NKJV

4. [***the Sanhedrin—the highest governing authority in the Jewish legal system**] “And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.” Acts 4:5-6 NKJV
5. **“But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. As yet you exalt yourself against My people** in that you will not let them go. Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now.” Exodus 9:16-18 NKJV
6. “And Pharaoh sent and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, **“I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous,** and my people and I are wicked. **Entreat the Lord,** that there may be no more mighty thundering and hail, for it is enough. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.”” Exodus 9:27-28 NKJV
7. “And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, **he sinned yet more; and he hardened his heart,** he and his servants.” Exodus 9:34 NKJV
8. “Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and said, **“I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you. Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once,** and **entreat the Lord your God,** that He may take away from me this death only.”” Exodus 10:16-17 NKJV
9. “So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. **For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.”** Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.” Romans 9:16-18 NKJV
10. “This is a faithful saying: **If a man desires the position of a bishop [an overseeing authority],** he desires a good work. **A bishop then must be** blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. **Moreover he must have a good testimony among**

those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." I Timothy 3:1-7 NKJV (See I Timothy 3:1-13)

11. "Let no one despise your youth, but **be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity**. Till I come, **give *attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine**. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. **Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all**. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you." I Timothy 4:12-16 NKJV
12. "**All Scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**" II Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV
13. "But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that **the rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you;** but whoever desires to become great among you, **let him be your servant**. And whoever desires to be first among you, **let him be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**" Matthew 20:25-28 NKJV
14. "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh **has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God**. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you **do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation**, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **For this reason the gospel was preached** also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." I Peter 4:1-6 NKJV
15. "Do not be deceived: "**Evil company corrupts good habits.**" **Awake to righteousness**, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." I Corinthians 15:33-34 NKJV
16. "**As iron sharpens iron**, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." Proverbs 27:17 NKJV

(2) Proper Perspective

(a) God's Leaders of Choice

1. "Therefore whoever **resists the authority resists the ordinance of God**, and those who resist will **bring judgment on themselves**. Romans 13:2 NKJV
2. **Paul on the road to Damascus:** "As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then **he fell to the ground**, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.**" {8} Then Saul arose from the ground, and when **his eyes were opened he saw no one**. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank." Acts 9:3-5, 8-9 NKJV
3. **Jacob wrestles with God:** "Then Jacob was left alone; and **a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day**. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, **He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him**. And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"" Genesis 32:24-26 NKJV

(3) Godly Leader vs. Secular Governance

- (a) As you approach this interpretation, consider the stark contrast between godly leadership and secular governments.
 1. "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." Romans 13:3 NKJV
 2. "For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? **Do you not judge those who are inside?** But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person." I Corinthians 5:12-13 NKJV
 3. "For the time has come **for judgment to begin at the house of God**; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now "**If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?**" Therefore **let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good**, as to a faithful Creator." I Peter 4:17-19 NKJV
 4. "Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, **what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,**" II Peter 3:11 NKJV
 5. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.**" II Corinthians 10:3-6 NKJV

6. **“the blessing, if you obey the commandments** of the Lord your God which I command you today; and **the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord** your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known.” Deuteronomy 11:27-28 NKJV
7. **““Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments** which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. **And all these blessings shall come upon you** and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God:” Deuteronomy 28:1-2 NKJV (See blessings: Deuteronomy 28:1-14)
8. **““But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments** and His statutes which I command you today, that **all these curses will come upon you** and overtake you:” Deuteronomy 28:15 NKJV (See curses: Deuteronomy 28:15-68)
9. “But He said, “More than that, **blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!**”” Luke 11:28 NKJV
10. **““Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them,** I will liken him to a wise man who built his **house on the rock:** and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. “But **everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them,** will be like a foolish man who built his **house on the sand:** and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”” Matthew 7:24-27 NKJV

GOD’S MINISTERS

2. Paradigm Shift

A. Who are God’s Ministers?

(1) Ministers for Good!

- (a) Three times in the next four verses Paul hyper-emphasizes the identity and assignment of these authority figures to whom you are being admonished to follow.
 1. “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.**”Romans 13:4 NKJV
 2. “Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, **let him be your servant.**” Matthew 20:26 NKJV
 3. “And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. “And do not be afraid of their

threats, nor be troubled." But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and **always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you**, with **meekness** and fear; having a **good conscience**, that when they defame you as evildoers, **those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed**. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil." I Peter 3:13-17 NKJV

4. "Therefore, from now on, **we regard no one according to the flesh**. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and **has given us the ministry of reconciliation**, that is, that God was in Christ **reconciling the world to Himself**, not imputing their trespasses to them, **and has committed to us the word of reconciliation**. Now then, **we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us**: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." II Corinthians 5:16-21 NKJV
5. "'Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. **If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.**" Matthew 10:11-13 NKJV
6. "And **whoever will not receive you nor hear your words**, when you depart from that house or city, **shake off the dust from your feet**. Assuredly, I say to you, **it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment** than for that city!" Matthew 10:14-15 NKJV
7. "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "**Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.**" John 20:22-23 NKJV
8. "If anyone **sees his brother sinning a sin** which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. **There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that**. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death." I John 5:16-17 NKJV (See: [The Sin that Leads to Death](#))

(2) Do the Right Thing

(a) Therefore what?

1. "Therefore you must **be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake**." Romans 13:5 NKJV

2. **For conscience' sake:** "There is also an ***antitype [in context: the great flood]** which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, **but the answer of a good conscience toward God**), through the **resurrection of Jesus Christ,**" 1 Peter 3:21 NKJV
 3. "**You did not choose Me, but I chose you** and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. **These things I command you, that you love one another.**" John 15:16-17 NKJV
 4. "Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.** He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, **not that we loved God, but that He loved us** and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, **if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**" 1 John 4:7-11 NKJV
- (3) Shifting perspective on what it is you are paying...
- (a) Because of this you also pay taxes. What taxes and why?
 1. "For because of this you also **pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.**" Romans 13:6 NKJV
 2. "Let **the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.** For the Scripture says [Deuteronomy 25:4], "**You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,**" and, "**The laborer is worthy of his wages.**"" 1 Timothy 5:17-18 NKJV
 3. "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defense to those who examine me is this: **Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife,** as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I **who have no right to refrain from working? Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?** Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? **For it is written in the law of Moses [Deuteronomy 25:4], "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain."** Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. **If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?"** 1 Corinthians 9:1-11 NKJV

4. ““You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. **Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it**, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the Lord, **and it be sin to you.**”Deuteronomy 24:14-15 NKJV
5. “**Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!** Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. **Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord** of Sabaoth. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.”James 5:1-6 NKJV
6. “For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,” and, **“The laborer is worthy of his wages.”**” I Timothy 5:18 NKJV
7. “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy **but to fulfill [complete, bring to fullness].**” Matthew 5:17 NKJV
8. ““You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. **Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it**, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the Lord, and it be sin to you.”Deuteronomy 24:14-15 NKJV
9. “**Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so.** Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it,” When you have it with you.” Proverbs 3:27-28 NKJV

(4) Render what is Due

- (a) Give to God’s ministers like you are paying off a debt.
 1. “**Render therefore to all their due: taxes** to whom taxes are due, **customs** to whom customs, **fear** to whom fear, **honor** to whom honor.” Romans 13:7 NKJV
 2. “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. **So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.**” II Corinthians 9:6-8 NKJV

3. ““And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, **but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him**, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,” Deuteronomy 10:12 NKJV
4. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all [his entire duty]**. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 NKJV
5. “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. **So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.**” II Corinthians 9:6-8 NKJV
6. “Give, and it will be given to you: **good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over** will be put into your bosom. For with **the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.**” Luke 6:38 NKJV
7. “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.**” Romans 13:1 NKJV
8. “**Render therefore to all their due...**” Romans 13:7 NKJV