

## =FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

### Lesson 52

#### Romans 13 - Being Subject to Higher Powers

**INTRODUCTION:** It is God's plan that imperfect men choose for themselves leaders and that power be invested in these leaders. God has planned that every child should have a father, every church should have a pastor, every nation should have a king or a president, every state should have a governor, every city should have a mayor, etc. This does not mean that the people are perfect, but it does mean that their office carries with it authority. God is not always for what they do, but He is always for having the office. It is better for one of us to be chosen to rule over the rest of us than for each of us to rule over himself. To be sure, there are certain freedoms that each of us has, but there must be certain freedoms that each of us forfeits to the leader of God's choice. Again, it is not always God's man who is in the position, but it is always God's will to have the position. Bear in mind, when the Apostle Paul in Romans 13 was reminding us to be subject to the higher powers, Nero was king. No doubt he was the most wicked king or at least one of the most wicked kings that ever lived. Let us notice the teachings of this chapter.

- I. THE CHRISTIAN IS TO BE SUBJECT TO AUTHORITY.
  1. We are to be subject to rulers. Romans 13:1.
  2. The child is to be subject to his parents. Ephesians 6:1-3.
  3. The employee is to be subject to the employer. Ephesians 6:5-7.
  4. The student should be subject to the teacher.
  5. The member is to be led by the pastor. Hebrews 13:7, 17.

There is a reason for all of this. If the child is obedient to his mother and father, if the student is obedient to his teacher, if the employee is obedient to the employer, it will be transferred to God when the child is older. He has been taught obedience and respect for authority. He has been warned against anarchy and has practiced obedience to higher powers. Consequently, the child transfers this same allegiance to God, for he has been practicing obedience and subjection all of his life. (Teacher, please stress here the importance of obeying authority. The parent is not always right, and he is not always pleasing to God, but it does please God that we have parents. The boss is not always right, and he does not always please God, but it does please God that we have a boss. The ruler is not always right, and he is not always the man of God's choice, but it is God's choice that we have a ruler. Any society, church or organization will operate better when there is subjection to authority.)

Notice here Proverbs 24:21, "My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change." What he is saying here is that we are to fear the Lord and the king. Fearing the king is fearing the Lord. Notice, if you would, the words, "meddle not with...change." There is a warning to young people not to meddle with the change of the plan of God. It is a warning not to be a part of the

revolutionary crowd that wants to change the establishment.

II. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD PAY HIS TAXES. Read Romans 13:6, 7, “For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

III. THE CHRISTIAN IS TO HONOR THOSE WHO HAVE AUTHORITY. See Romans 13:7d. (Teacher, in this point go through the office of mayor, president, pastor, parent, teacher, principal, etc., and ask the pupils to explain to you how they can honor these offices.) Again, it does not mean that we voted for the person in office. It does not mean we are for the person in office. It does not mean that the person in office is even pleasing to God or chosen by God; but the office is chosen by God, and it should be respected as such.

IV. WHEN THE CHRISTIAN DOES NOT DO THIS, THERE ARE TWO INEVITABLE RESULTS.

1. He resists God. Romans 13:2a. There is no way that a child can be right with God and wrong with his parents. There is no way that a child can be right with God and wrong with his teacher. Even if the teacher is wrong, the position is right, and God wants us to obey him. Now this is an interesting truth. Though the teacher is sometimes wrong, to be sure, he will be right more than the child. Though the parent is sometimes wrong, to be sure, he will be right more than the child. Though the ruler is sometimes wrong, to be sure, he nevertheless is in an office that is ordained of God; and so, when we resist authority, we resist the Lord.

2. Judgment will come to us if we do not adhere to this Scriptural practice. Romans 13:2b. The word “damnation” here does not mean that one goes to Hell because he does this; it means that God will judge him. God will punish him, and the person will not live the happy, contented life that God wants him to live.

CONCLUSION: Teacher, have the pupils discuss examples in our day when this practice is perverted and when authority is thwarted. Think of situations where the pupils in your class could be in a position either to honor or flaunt authority, to submit or resist. Try to help them in situations such as obeying in school, obeying the laws of the land, etc. Lead them to I Peter 2:13-15. Read those verses to them. Make the lesson very practical.