

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
ROMANS

Lesson 17

The APPLICATION of the Righteousness of God:
The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties, Part 2
(Romans 13:1-14)

THE STRUCTURE OF ROMANS

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PART 1: The REVELATION of the Righteousness of God	(1:18 to 8:39)
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THE STRUCTURE OF ROMANS

INTRODUCTION

(1:1-17)

PART 1: The REVELATION of the Righteousness of God

(1:18 to 8:39)

PART 2: The VINDICATION of the Righteousness of God

(9:1 to 11:36)

PART 3: The APPLICATION of the Righteousness of God

(12:1 to 15:13)

(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)

1) Responsibility Toward God

(12:1-2)

2) Responsibility Toward Society

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3) Responsibility Toward Higher Powers

(13:1-7)

Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:1

- ¹ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.
For there is no power but of God:
the powers that be are ordained of God.

In this chapter, Paul instructs Christians on their duty to obey civic government. The fact that this letter was addressed to Christians living under the Roman Empire shows that this duty is not just for Christians living in societies that are friendly to the people of God.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:1

¹ Let every soul be subject unto **the higher powers**.

For there is no power but of God:
the powers that be are ordained of God.

Strong's Bible Concordance

HIGHER ὑπερέχω huperecho
to be above, superior in rank,
authority, power.

POWERS ἐξουσία exousia

1. the power of authority and of right; of rule or government.
2. the power of the one whose commands must be obeyed.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:1

¹ Let every soul be subject unto **the higher powers.**

For there is no power but of God:
the powers that be are ordained of God.

This phrase **“the higher powers”** is translated **“the governing authorities”** in NKJ, NIV, and others.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:1

¹ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.

For there is no power but of God:
the powers that be are ordained of God.

God does not only use the righteous to carry out his will.



Kingdoms and empires are
established by God to do his will:

Colossians 1:16

For by him were all things created,
that are in heaven, and that are in earth,
visible and invisible,
whether *they be* thrones, or dominions,
or principalities, or powers:
all things were created by him,
and for him:



God used the Pharaoh of Egypt (as we learned in Chapter 9), Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and Cyrus of Persia to bring his purpose to pass.

Jeremiah 27:6-7

- ⁶ And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, **my servant**, and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.
- ⁷ And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.



God used the Pharaoh of Egypt (as we learned in Chapter 9), Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and Cyrus of Persia to bring his purpose to pass.

2 Chronicles 36:22-23a

- ²² Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, **that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished**, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,
- ²³ Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah ...



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:2

² **Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:** and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Since these powers are ordained of God, to resist them is the same as resisting God.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:2

² Whosoever therefore **resisteth** the power, **resisteth** the ordinance of God: and they that **resist** shall receive to themselves damnation.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

RESIST: (3 times in this verse!)

1. Literally, to stand against; to withstand; hence, to act in opposition, or to oppose.
2. To endeavor to counteract, defeat, or frustrate.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:2

² Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:
and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

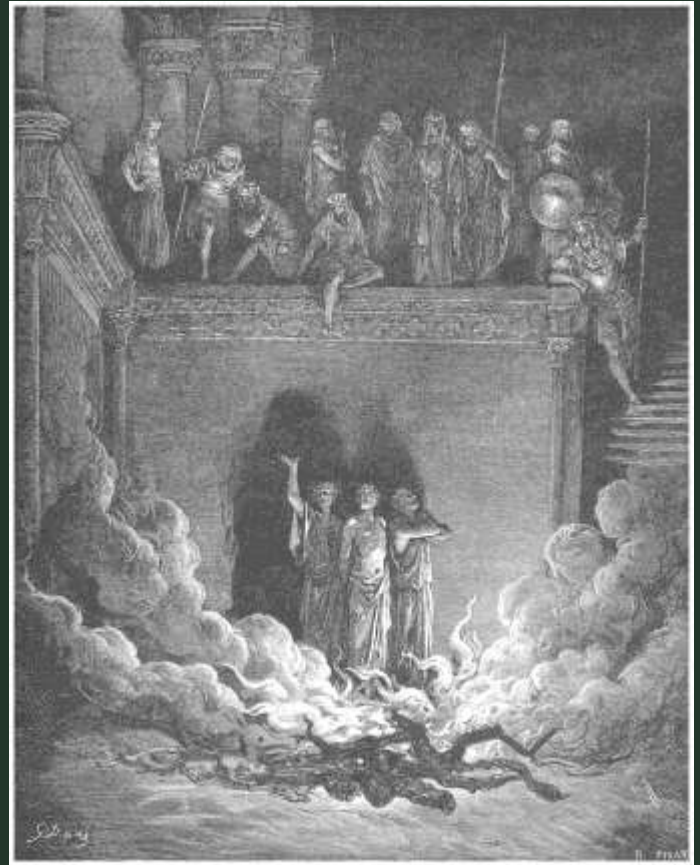
Paul is not speaking of *eternal* damnation. He is talking about the consequence of breaking the law of the land.



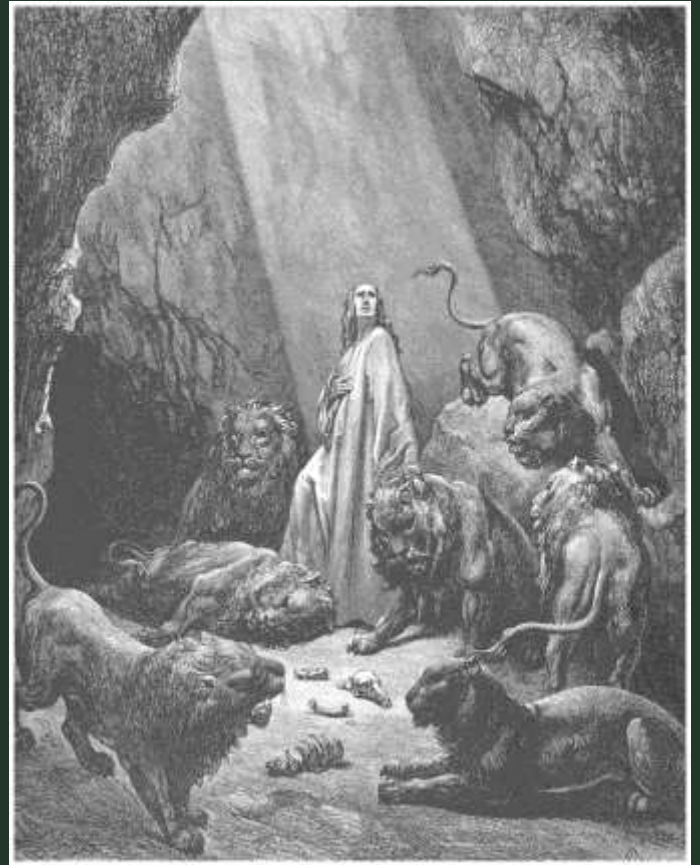
But doesn't the Bible speak of times when God's people *rightfully* rebelled against evil governors?

Actually, no it does not!

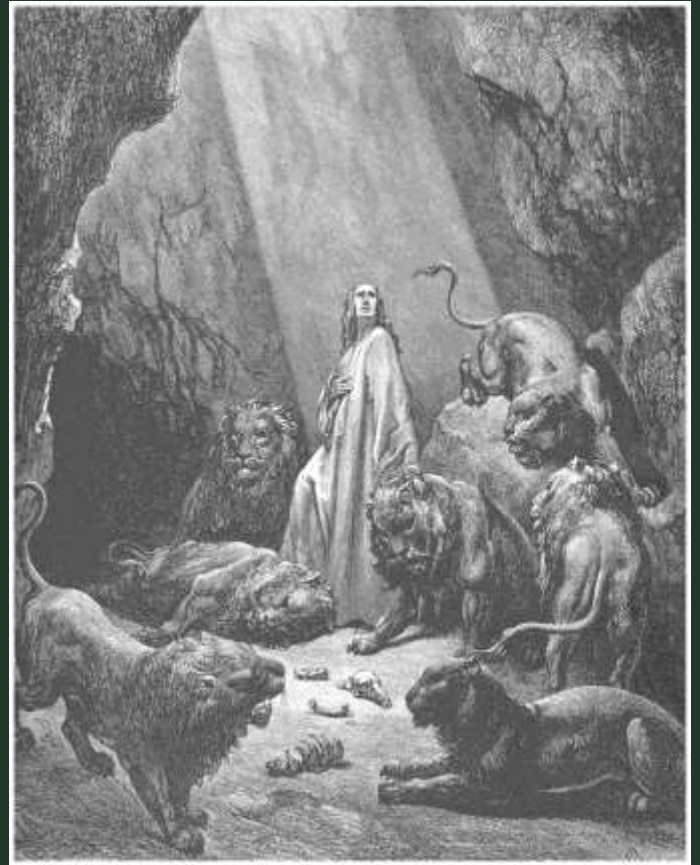
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow before Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, even though his law said that anyone who refused "should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" (Daniel 3:11).



Daniel did not stop praying to God, even after King Darius of Persia declared that “every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save the king, shall be cast into the den of lions” (Daniel 6:12).



But none of these men tried to escape their punishment. They KNEW they would be punished for it.





When Peter and Paul were arrested, they did not try to escape from prison. They were both released by a miracle – Paul by an earthquake, and Peter by an angel.



In Acts 5:29, Peter and the apostles told the rulers in Jerusalem, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

But they never tried to overthrow that council or lead a rebellion against it.

And of course, Jesus never tried to resist his crucifixion.

Matthew 26:53-54

- ⁵³ Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?
- ⁵⁴ But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?



The Bible does not tell us that all rulers are good:

Proverbs 28:15

As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear;
so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.



But God never sanctions rebellion:

Ecclesiastes 10:4

If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee,
leave not thy place;
for yielding pacifieth great offences.



But God never sanctions rebellion:

Ecclesiastes 10:4

If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee,
leave not thy place;
for yielding pacifieth great offences.

If the anger of the ruler rises against you,
do not leave your post,
for calmness will undo great offenses. (RSV)



Even when God's people are punished for doing GOOD, we should not fight back:

1 Peter 2:17-23

- 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.
- 18 Servants, *be* subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward [contrary; stubborn].
- 19 For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.
- 20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, **when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.**
- 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:
- 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:
- 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

God can take down
the same kingdoms and empires
he put into place:

Daniel 2:21

... [God] removeth kings, and setteth
up kings:



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:3

- ³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

Those who live according to the law do not need to fear the law.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:3

- ³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? **do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:**

Proverbs 16:7

When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:4

- 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good.
But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

We need the laws of the land to protect us from the evil things people do to each other.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:4

- 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good.
But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid;
for he beareth not the sword in vain:
for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

When lawbreakers have no fear of punishment, the law is meaningless.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:4

4 For he is **the minister of God** to thee for good.

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain:

for he is **the minister of God**, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

He is a minister of God to reward those who do good, and to punish those who do evil.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:5

⁵ Wherefore **ye must needs be subject**,
not only for wrath,
but also for conscience sake.

We need to learn to obey the laws because it is the right thing to do, and not only because we will be punished for disobeying them.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:6

⁶ For for this cause pay ye tribute also:
for they are God's ministers,
attending continually upon this very thing.

This is also why we are instructed to
pay our taxes.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:6

⁶ For for this cause pay ye **tribute** also:
for they are God's ministers,
attending continually upon this very thing.

Strong's Bible Concordance

Tribute

φόρος phoros

the annual tax levied upon
houses, lands, and persons.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:6

⁶ For for this cause pay ye tribute also:
for they are God's ministers,
attending continually upon this very thing.

[NIV] This is also why you pay taxes,
for the authorities are God's
servants, who give their full time to
governing.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:7

⁷ Render therefore to all their dues:
tribute to whom tribute *is due*;
custom to whom custom;
fear to whom fear;
honour to whom honour.

As Jesus said, we should “Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's” (Matt. 22:21).



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:7

- 7 **Render therefore to all their dues:**
tribute to whom tribute *is due*;
custom to whom custom;
fear to whom fear;
honour to whom honour.

Our tithes are not a tax, but an acknowledge of God's sovereignty and provision in our lives.

As for our civil taxes, God can provide those fees in wondrous ways!





Matthew 17:24-26

²⁴ And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

²⁵ He saith, Yes.

And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

²⁶ Peter saith unto him, Of strangers.

Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.



Matthew 17:27

²⁷ Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them,
go thou to the sea, and cast an hook,
and take up the fish that first cometh up;
and when thou hast opened his mouth,
thou shalt find a piece of money:
that take, and give unto them for me and thee.



Matthew 17:27

²⁷ Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

“The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof,” (Ps 24:1), and we are “the children of the living God” (Rom 9:26). As Jesus said, “Then are the children free.”



Matthew 17:27

²⁷ Notwithstanding, **lest we should offend them,**
go thou to the sea, and cast an hook,
and take up the fish that first cometh up;
and when thou hast opened his mouth,
thou shalt find a piece of money:
that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

But “lest we offend them,” God has decreed that we render unto God AND Caesar.

Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:7

⁷ Render therefore to all their dues:
tribute to whom tribute *is due*;
custom to whom custom;
fear to whom fear;
honour to whom honour.

Strong's Bible Concordance

τέλος telos

toll, custom (i.e. indirect tax on goods)



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:7

- 7 Render therefore to all their dues:
tribute to whom tribute *is due*;
custom to whom custom;
fear to whom fear;
honour to whom honour.

Strong's Bible Concordance

φόβος phobos

- 1) fear, dread, terror
- 2) reverence for one's husband



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:7

- 7 Render therefore to all their dues:
tribute to whom tribute *is due*;
custom to whom custom;
fear to whom fear;
honour to whom honour.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

HONOR, [Latin *honor* *honor*.]

1. The esteem due or paid to worth; high estimation.
2. Reverence; veneration; or any act by which reverence and submission are expressed.





There are many seats of authority on earth, but there is ONE throne in heaven from which the LORD watches them all. As Romans 13 makes clear, when we moan against magistrates, we moan against God.

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(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)

1) Responsibility Toward God

(12:1-2)

2) Responsibility Toward Society

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3) Responsibility Toward Higher Powers

(13:1-7)



4) Responsibility Toward Neighbors

(13:8-14)

Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:8

⁸ Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

No living person is ever completely debt-free, for there is always at least one thing he owes:



Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:8

⁸ Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

John 13:34-35

³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.
³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.



When we walk in the love of Jesus,
we are as close as we will ever be in
this life to God, and to perfection.

Matthew 5:46-48

- 46 For if ye love them which love you,
what reward have ye?
do not even the publicans the same?
- 47 And if ye salute your brethren only,
what do ye more *than others*?
do not even the publicans so?
- 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your
Father which is in heaven is perfect.



Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:9

⁹ For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery,
Thou shalt not kill,
Thou shalt not steal,
Thou shalt not bear false witness,
Thou shalt not covet;
and if *there be* any other commandment,
it is briefly comprehended in this saying,
namely,
Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

All these “shalt nots” were given to teach God’s people how to keep the second commandment!



Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:10

¹⁰ Love worketh no ill to his neighbour:
therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

All God has ever asked of us is to
love!



Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:11-12

- ¹¹ And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.
- ¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

Our attention to the things of the Spirit – namely, our keeping of the great commandments – are our first obligation.



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Paul now warns us against six sins that are sure to offend our neighbors.



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ **Let us walk honestly, as in the day;**
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ **But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,**
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts thereof.

This section begins and ends with this exhortation towards goodness.



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ **Let us walk honestly, as in the day;**
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts thereof.

Strong's Bible Concordance

εὐσχημόνως euschemonos
in a seemly manner, decently



Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

RIOTING, *noun*

Reveling; indulging in excessive feasting.



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

DRUNKENNESS, *noun*
Intoxication; inebriation;
a state in which a person is
overwhelmed or overpowered
with spirituous liquors, so that
his reason is disordered, and he
reels or staggers in walking.



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

CHAMBERING, *noun*

Wanton, lewd, immodest
behavior.

(a chamber is a bedroom,
so *chambering* means going
from bed to bed.)



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

WANTONNESS, *noun*

1. Licentiousness; negligence of restraint.
2. Lasciviousness; lewdness.



Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

STRIFE, *noun*

1. Exertion or contention for superiority;
2. Contention in anger or enmity; contest; struggle for victory; quarrel or war.



Responsibility Toward Neighbors (13:8-14)

Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

ENVYING, *noun*

Mortification experienced at the supposed prosperity and happiness of another.



Responsibility Toward Higher Powers (13:1-7)

Romans 13:13-14

- ¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting
and drunkenness,
not in chambering
and wantonness,
not in strife
and envying.
- ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to fulfil the lusts thereof.

The only cure for a sinful life is to
“put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”



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(B) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties (14:1 to 15:13)

Having warned us against the sins of self-indulgence, Paul will use the next chapter to address the proper use of the liberties we have in Christ.

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. Are Christians only supposed to obey governments that are friendly to the church?
2. According to Romans 13:1, the powers of government are ordained by ____.
3. Who are the two Gentile rulers named in this lesson who carried out God's will?
4. What word appears three times in 13:2? Is it something Christians should do?
5. In Romans 13:4, what are the two ways a ruler is a minister of God?
6. In Matthew 17, where did Peter find the money to pay his tax?
7. According to Romans 13:8, what is the one thing we always owe?
8. All the "shalt nots" of Romans 13:9 teach us to keep which great commandment?
9. What are the 6 sins against our neighbor listed in Romans 13:13?
10. According to Romans 13:14, what is the cure for these sins?

Each question is worth 10 points. Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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