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What About Government & Romans Chapter 13?

By *Chuck Baldwin July 15, 2009*

It seems that everytime someone attempts to encourage our Christian brothers and sisters to resist an unconstitutional or otherwise reprehensible government policy, we hear the retort, "What about Romans Chapter 13? We Christians must submit to government—any government. Read your Bible, and leave me alone." Or other words to that effect.

No doubt, some who use this argument are sincere. They are only repeating what they have heard their pastor and other religious leaders say. On the other hand, let's be honest enough to admit that some who use this argument are just plain lazy, apathetic and indifferent. And, Romans 13 is their escape from responsibility. I suspect this is the much larger group.

Nevertheless, for the benefit of those who are sincere (but obviously misinformed), let's briefly examine Romans, Chapter 13. I quote Romans, Chapter 13, verses 1 through 7 from the Authorized King James text:

"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. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 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: 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. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 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."

Do our Christian friends who use these verses to teach that we should not oppose America's political leaders really believe that civil magistrates have unlimited authority to do anything they want without opposition? I doubt whether they truly believe that.

For example, what if our President decided to resurrect the old monarchical custom of *Jus Primae Noctis* (Law of First Night)? That was the old medieval custom when the king claimed the right to sleep with a subject's bride on the first night of their marriage. Would our sincere Christian brethren sheepishly say, "Romans, Chapter 13 says we must submit to the government?" I think not. And would any of us respect any man who would submit to such a law?

So, there are limits to authority. A father has authority in his home, but does this give him power to abuse his wife and children? No, of course not. An employer has authority on the job, but does this give him power to control the private lives of his employees? No. A pastor has overseer authority in the church, but does this give him power to tell employers in his church how to run their businesses? No, of course not. All human authority is limited in nature. No man has unlimited authority over the lives of other men. (Lordship and Sovereignty is the exclusive domain of Jesus Christ.)

By the same token, a civil magistrate has authority in civil matters, but his authority is limited and defined. Observe that Romans, Chapter 13 clearly limits the authority of civil government by strictly defining its purpose: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil . . . For he is the minister of God to thee for good . . . for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Notice that civil government must not be a "terror to good works." It has no power or authority to terrorize good works or good people. God never gave it that authority. And any government that oversteps that divine boundary has no divine authority or protection. This is a basic principle of Natural Law (and all of America's legal documents—including the U.S. Constitution—are founded upon the God-ordained principles of Natural Law).

The apostle clearly states that civil government is a "minister of God to thee for good." It is not a minister of God for evil. Civil magistrates have a divine duty to "execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." They have no authority to execute wrath upon him that doeth good. None. Zilch. Zero. And anyone who says they do is lying. So, even in the midst of telling Christians to submit to civil authority, Romans, Chapter 13 limits the power and reach of civil authority.

Did Moses violate God's principle of submission to authority when he killed the Egyptian taskmaster in defense of his fellow Hebrew? Did Elijah violate God's principle of submission to authority when he openly challenged Ahab and Jezebel? Did David violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to surrender to Saul's troops? Did Daniel violate God's principle of submission to authority when he disobeyed the king's command to not pray audibly to God? Did the three Hebrew children violate God's principle of submission to authority when they refused to bow to the image of the state? Did John the Baptist violate God's principle of submission to authority when he publicly scolded King Herod for his infidelity? Did Simon Peter and the other Apostles violate God's principle of submission to authority when they refused to stop preaching on the streets of Jerusalem? Did Paul violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to obey those authorities who demanded that he abandon his missionary work? In fact, Paul spent almost as much time in jail as he did out of jail.

Remember, every apostle of Christ (except John) was killed by hostile, civil authorities opposed to their endeavors. Christians through-out church history were imprisoned, tortured, or killed by civil authorities of all stripes for refusing to submit to their various laws and prohibitions. Did all of these Christian martyrs violate God's principle of submission to authority?

So, even the great prophets, apostles and writers of the Bible (including the writer of Romans, Chapter 13) understood that human authority—even civil authority—is limited.

Plus, Paul makes it clear that our submission to civil authority must be predicated on more than fear of governmental retaliation. Notice, he said, "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Which means, our obedience to civil authority is more than just "because they said so." It is also a matter of conscience. This means we must think and reason for ourselves regarding the justness and rightness of our government's laws. Obedience is not automatic or robotic. It is a result of both rational deliberation and moral approbation.

Therefore, there are times when civil authority may need to be resisted. Either governmental abuse of power or the violation of conscience (or both) could precipitate civil disobedience. Of course, how and when we decide to resist civil authority is an entirely separate issue. And I will reserve that discussion for another time.

Beyond that, we in the United States of America do not live under a monarchy. We have no king. There is no single governing official in this country. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with any man or any group of men. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with the President, the Congress or even the Supreme Court. In America, the U.S. Constitution is the "supreme Law of the Land." Under

our laws, every governing official publicly promises to submit to the Constitution of the United States. Do readers understand the significance of this distinction? I hope so.

This means that, in America, the "higher powers" are not the men who occupy elected office; they are the tenets and principles set forth in the U.S. Constitution. Under our laws and form of government, it is the duty of every citizen, including our elected officials, to obey the U.S. Constitution. Therefore, this is how Romans, Chapter 13 reads to Americans:

"Let every soul be subject unto the [U.S. Constitution.] For there is no [Constitution] but of God: the [Constitution] that be [is] ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the [Constitution], resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For [the Constitution is] not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the [Constitution]? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For [the Constitution] is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for [the Constitution] beareth not the sword in vain: for [the Constitution] is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for [the Constitution is] God's minister, 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."

Dear Christian friend, the above is exactly the proper understanding of our responsibility to civil authority in these United States according to the teaching of Romans Chapter 13.

Furthermore, Christians, above all people, should desire that their elected representatives submit to the Constitution because it is constitutional government that has done more to protect Christian liberty than any other governing document ever devised by man. As I have noted before in this column, Biblical principles and Natural Law form the foundation of all three of America's founding documents: the **Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.**

*It should also be noted and never forgotten, that because of our written and ratified Constitution which 'we the people' authored, Providence provided, and Almighty God has allowed to stand for more than 200 years, we are the sovereign people of this great nation. We America Citizens are subservient only to Almighty God, Jesus Christ and common or natural law. We are the kings and queens of this nation and the Constitution is our scepter. We the people rule by the authority of the Constitution. **This is a true statement,** and the sooner that the people realize who we are and begin to behave in like manner the sooner we will have our nation back. Until then, any ole' slick, usurping, carpet bagging politician that wins his or her election, will be giving us our marching orders. If and when this tragedy occurs and illegitimate leaders obtain complete control, we will then be forced to mount another armed and bloody struggle for liberty.*

Comments by ~Adverse Yaw

If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself.

~ Saint Augustine

The Widow and Her Tomato

Granna was warm in the summer sun as she sat in her wheelchair holding the water hose. She was directing the water onto one of the few remaining tomato vines in the little garden spot. This had become her daily task – watering the vine. One of the nurses, Kay would push her out to the garden, hand her the hose, then turn on a trickle of water. Granna loved her job! It gave her a sense of worth; a sense of value. It made her feel “needed” in a small way.

An interesting thing about this vine – it only had one tomato! But what a beauty it was becoming! Already it was the size of a tennis ball. As she watched the water fall she wondered, ‘how big will it become before it turns ripe-red?’ She didn’t have long to wonder...

After one more week of tender loving care, the tomato started to show a little pink. It was now the size of a large orange and its weight pulled at the vine. It was hanging nearer and nearer the earth. Soon, she began to observe a little red in the center of the pink rind. ‘It won’t be long now!’ she thought.

Sure enough, after the passing of a couple more weeks it seemed to Granna, time for a decision. Kay had wheeled her to the garden and handed her the hose. Granna was beginning her ritual when a small tear of happiness mixed with sadness began to well in her eye. She knew the time had come. The tomato was beautiful! Hanging almost to the ground and as large as a softball, she observed the sun’s glinting off its now vine-ripened ruby-red skin. Truly, it was time.

She called for the nurse. “Kay, please turn the water off and come here.” Kay politely followed Granna’s request and joined her beside the wheelchair.

“Isn’t it lovely?” more commenting than asking.

“Yes. Quite!” Kay agreed.

With moistened eyes, a bit of a lump in her throat and her soft voice breaking Granna said, “I think it’s time to harvest this little gift from God. Would you pick it for me, please?”

Kay responded softly, “Sure, Mrs. Osborn. If that’s what you’d like...”

The nurse gingerly stepped one foot into the garden, then reaching down carefully snapped the vine leaving a bit of stem and two perfect leaves attached to the beautiful fruit.

“Here you go,” she said as she gently placed the tomato into Granna’s cupped hands and lap.

Granna raised the fruit for inspection. “Oh... It’s so pretty,” she bragged behind a soft smile.

Kay agreed. “I think it’s the grandest tomato I’ve ever seen!

Where would you like to go, Mrs. Osborn?”

“Take me to the kitchen if you please,” answered Granna.

It was just before lunch as they re-entered the hall from the garden. Those able were making their way, and those who needed help were being assisted toward the dining room. Granna smiled and raised her prize for anyone who glanced at her luscious fruit. The glances became stares followed by smiles of approval.

In the kitchen, Granna requested it be washed and then asked for a knife. The request having been completed, Granna was rolled to her own special table – her usual spot for dining. It was with great pride she gently laid the tomato on the plate, removed the stem, and then began to slice. With the cutlery, she halved the juicy giant and then halved it again. Then she looked up, studied the room for a long moment and then returned to her paring.

Kay watched as Mrs. Osborn continued to divide the tomato. She noted Mrs. Osborn’s performing her task as if she had a specific reason, but she knew not what it might be...

Granna made the final slice then raised her eyes. With a twinkle in her eye Granna said, “Kay, I’ve cut this so everyone in the room may have a slice of our beautiful tomato.” Holding up the plate she requested, “Would you please pass it around?”

With a bit of astonishment, yet at the same time realizing she shouldn’t be surprised by Mrs. Osborn’s generosity, she reached for the plate. With a smile she said, “Sure. I’d be glad to.”

She kissed Granna on the forehead and began to share the tasty tidbits around the room. “This is from Mrs. Osborn’s love-apple!” she said as she handed each one their bite.

Humorist Lewis Grizzard once said, “It’s difficult to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a homegrown tomato.” Granna knew that too! She knew this versatile fruit could bring sweet memories and pleasant thoughts to all who partook. But to me, this story is deeper than that!

Granna, in her home for the elderly can't "bring cheer" like she once did, but in her prime, Granna's special talent was bringing cheer! Especially with her food.

When I first heard this story, it was with few details. My inserts may or may not be exact, but the "watering," "harvesting" and "sharing" are all fact!

My first thought after having heard this was of the Bible story, "The Widow and her Mite." Granna saw the bloom, and then the berry-bud which she nurtured until the globe-shaped fruit was vine-ripe and ready! It became her "mite," and she shared it. Not some of it. But all of it! She gave her mite away...

Watch, listen and learn! Our older family members still have so much yet to give! That's why we love you, Granna!

Gaylon Stamps, September 18th, 2009

A man who chooses between drinking a glass of milk and a glass of a solution of potassium cyanide does not choose between two beverages; he chooses between life and death. A society that chooses between capitalism and socialism does not choose between two social systems; it chooses between social cooperation and the disintegration of society. Socialism is not an alternative to capitalism; it is an alternative to any system under which men can live as human beings.

Words

Can you read these right the first time?

- 1) The bandage was **wound** around the **wound**.
- 2) The farm was used to **produce produce**.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to **refuse** more **refuse**.
- 4) We must **polish** the **Polish** furniture.
- 5) He could **lead** if he would get the **lead** out.
- 6) The soldier decided to **desert** his dessert in the **desert**.
- 7) Since there is no time like the **present**, he thought it was time to **present** the **present**.
- 8) A **bass** was painted on the head of the **bass** drum.
- 9) When shot at, the **dove dove** into the bushes.
- 10) I did not **object** to the **object**.
- 11) The insurance was **invalid** for the **invalid**.
- 12) There was a **row** among the oarsmen about how to **row**.
- 13) They were too **close** to the door to **close** it.
- 14) The buck **does** funny things when the **does** are present.
- 15) A seamstress and a **sewer** fell down into a **sewer** line.
- 16) To help with planting, the farmer taught his **sow** to **sow**.
- 17) The **wind** was too strong to **wind** the sail.
- 18) Upon seeing the **tear** in the painting, I shed a **tear**.
- 19) I had to **subject** the **subject** to a series of tests.
- 20) How can I **intimate** this to my most **intimate** friend?

If your outflow is more than you income, your upkeep will be your downfall.

~Joyce Meyer

Sand Hill Cranes

Within the skeletons of tall grass turned golden by too many Texas High-Plains frosty mornings, the Sand Hill Cranes stood like thick shafted golf clubs stuck face-up in the sod.

"Cranes? On our pasture? Never before!" I ventured to explore, spaniel at heel and wondered what they'd do as we neared...

"Waaonk! Waaonk! Waaonk!" they called. Were they greeting us with, "Hello brothers!" or warning us, "Stay back you BEASTS!" or were they chatting without concern, discussing the bounty at beak or where they next may sail?

The hound ranged ahead, nose to the ground catching only scent, never spotting the long-neck avians dancing in the distance, wings outspread, hopping on long legs and chicken feet like Watusis.

Ever nearing the flock, I close the distance beyond the limit of their security. Calls multiply. The numbers of dancers increase until finally, one vaults high, grabs the wind and hoists himself aloft, followed by another, and then several, until one by one the grey-feathered flock has taken wing with the "whoosh" of a mini-hurricane and the constant cry, "Waaonk! Waaonk! Waaonk!"

The pup now stands nose to the wind, facing the flock by which I, too, am mesmerized. Awestruck by their ease of flight, I watch as they climb ever so gently, then circle, each lined behind its leader soaring toward another roost, another field padded with grass which may provide feed for the day, but with fewer interrupters.

By Gaylon Stamps, November 21, 2009

**It's not the size of the dog in the fight,
it's the size of the fight in the dog.**

~Mark Twain (1835-1910)

Neo-America

Time is difficult to explain as is life. It is much easier to comprehend both when we think about the Creator who created them. The whys and wherefores of it all can give us a clue and point us in a direction where the truth may be found.

Why would The Almighty Creator create us in His own image, and then allow us the liberty and freedom to fail? I don't claim to know all the answers to these questions, but I have an idea that it had all to do with Love.

Love is impossible without liberty and the freedom to choose. The ability to choose is impossible without choices. Comfort is not possible without pain. True achievement is not possible without struggle. Even flight is not possible without drag and gravity to overcome. Obedience to God is impossible without faith. Love is impossible without sacrifice. God created a wonderful way to express Himself through the gift of His Only Begotten Son. The Almighty Himself claims in his Word to be Love. Almighty God being both just and lovingly merciful couldn't have it both ways, just as we can't have it both ways in this life.

Yet, we want to have it both ways, and there are those in our government who would have us to believe that they can provide us the pleasure of having it both ways. We can be rich and prosper without working. The government is doing its best to create an environment where we can live forever in a place where all the decisions will be made for us. Where there will be a job for everyone who wants one, and everyone will have plenty because the government will balance the playing field by redistributing wealth. They will decide how to control the population via things like Planned Parenthood, abortion and euthanasia. They will determine value in all substance and even in life. A place where all will work the same and be healthy the same and wealthy the same. Something like the Communist tried in Eastern Europe, and the Chinese have tried in China. How did that work? Seems as though the Chinese have learned the abilities and success of Capitalism. Look at anything in your kitchen——most of it was made in China, Thailand, India or some other country. Very little is made in the USA anymore.

Why is it that you seldom see things that are made in the USA? Could it be that those in government have made it so difficult for American industry that they have all moved to places like Mexico, India and the Philippines? Or could it be that Americans have reached the first plateau of having it both ways by collecting payments for not working? Isn't that what we are trying to achieve here? Having it both ways is what we have learned on our televisions and at our movie theaters. Even some religious zealots have told us that all we have to do is ask God and then believe whatever we want is ours, and it is ours. We have been told that sacrifice is stupid, and that God is great, beer is good and people are crazy. We try to be like everyone else. After all who wants to work hard? What a stupid idea that is.

That is where we are headed because we have two houses of Congress that are desperately trying to convince us that this can work——although it has never worked before. President Obama and his cronies are trying to make the government into an all powerful government that will make all the decisions for all. They will control, control, control. This neo-government will have its finger and thumb on every detail of this life in these United States of America. This neo-government will become the god of the land. And, we will have fallen into Fascism where the individual is no longer significant, and the government is paramount.

It's not too late, but tarry long and it will be. If we wait too long: worship will be forced to go underground, the Internet will be closely watched, complaints about government and government officials will be forbidden, there will be more and more prisons and work camps to house all the dissidents, and many dissidents will disappear. This is not some exotic fabrication of mine. These things have already happened. Millions have been murdered by Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot and others. Things like these don't happen in places where freedom rings from every mountain side, where the individuals are guaranteed rights such as the Bill of Rights. But, once the guarantees have been destroyed, freedom no longer rings.

*Our Father God to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing:
Long may our land be bright
With Freedom's Holy light
Protect us by thy might
Great God, our King!*

If you think I'm am crazy, hide and watch, someday you might say I was a prophet. Prophet I am not. I just study a little history that's all.

~Adverse Yaw

Around the House & Farm

By Barkley Doudney Schnauzer Dog

As you can see, the Boss didn't leave me a lot of room to say much. But this I can say— it's cold, and I don't like it! I'm ready for Springtime!

Linda and the Boss seem to be doing fine, her here and him there. Both busy doing whatever humans do to occupy their time.

The Boss comes with mud on his boots, and the smell of horse in his clothing. He says he would be a better farmer if he had more money. Linda says she could be a better shopper if she had more money.

I guess that is what we need—more money!

Keep looking forward and remember to raise all the cane you can when it comes to your Representatives. Hold all Government employees' feet to the fire of truth! ~*Barkley*



Sisters