

Sermon Text: Romans 13:1-5

Sermon Theme: Who Establishes All Authorities?

"Create in Me" – (pg. 20)

Offering (The plates will not be passed but are at the entrance doors)

Offering Prayer

Prayer Of The Church (Responsive Prayer on Liturgy pg. 130)

Lord's Prayer (Traditional Version)

Hymn **C.W. 449 / TLH 648**

Collect / Prayer (pg. 25)

Benediction

Hymn **C.W. 619 / TLH 577**

SERMON TEXT: Romans 13:1-5

Vs. 1 – Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

Vs. 2 – Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Vs. 3 – For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.

Vs. 4 – For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Vs. 5 – Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

GREETING: Jesus says: heaven & Earth will pass away, but My Words will never pass away. .
(Matt. 24:35)

“God is not a God of disorder, but of peace.” (I Corinthians 14:33)

“Let all things be done decently and in order.” (I Corinthians 14:40 KJV)

The speed limit on highway “23” is 70 miles per hour, except in designated places, and even at designated times it is now able to be reduced due to the electronic lights that indicated lower speed limits such as at rush hour in the morning and evening.

If you decide that you are going to ignore the speed limit as indicated and go 100 miles per hour, it should not surprise you if a police officer pulls you over and gives you a ticket.

{Unless of course your radar detector has malfunctioned, then it may surprise you if you are pulled over while speeding.}

The purpose of the speed limit is to protect people against vehicle accidents, or at least it is an attempt to reduce the probability of having a vehicle accident. Speed limits are set in an attempt to protect people.

(Accidents still of course happened due to human error and miscalculations and lack of attention while driving.)

The speed limits have been set by government authorities.

This weekend as we celebrate Independence Day, we can look back at the Revolutionary War.

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress of America adopted the Declaration of Independence and broke ties with Great Britain.

Of course even before the document of the Declaration of Independence was adopted, there were disagreements which occurred between the British authorities and the American Colonists.

There was the Boston Tea Party (Dec. 16, 1773) and the cry of “*No taxation without representation*”.

On April 19, 1775 there was a clash between British troops and Colonial troops with the “shot heard round the world.”

Have you ever asked yourself, “At the time of the Revolutionary War which side would I have fought on?”

As a Christian, based upon this section of Scripture from Romans 13:1-5, which side would you have supported?

The Loyalists / Tories who were loyal to the British crown OR The American Patriots / Rebels depending upon your view point?

Listen to the Word of our Lord again:

Vs. 1 – Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

Vs. 2 – Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Would you have sided with the British Government, or the American Continental Congress?

Regardless of which side you might think that you might have fought on, since we are living in the year 2020, we do not need to make that decision. There would have also been many different factors, that we may not be aware of now, that would have influenced our decision one way or the other.

Regardless, God according to His wisdom, allowed the American colonies to win, and we now have many wonderful freedoms, especially the freedom to join together in Joint Public Worship with fellow Christians. - Do we take advantage of that blessing which God has given us?

Now in the year 2020 we do not have to make the choice between remaining loyal to the British or supporting the American Patriots, or as some might say - the rebels.

But there are other things taking place in America.

Right now there are some locations in our wonderful country of America that are experiencing high levels of infection of the COVID-19 virus. This has caused some areas and cities to impose a requirement to wear a mask to protect against the spread of the virus, in addition to social distancing.

This mandate to wear a mask has been put in place not to hurt people, but in an attempt to help and protect.

Perhaps you can think of other examples which the governing authorities have put into place.

God according to His wisdom and power has established the authorities that exist. This section of Scripture makes it clear.

Sometimes God even allows wicked and evil leaders to rule to carry out His will.

Other authorities that God has established in our lives in addition to the President and Governors includes Police, Parents, Teachers and Pastors.

Have we always obeyed these governing authorities?

When we disobey, God tells us that there are some pretty serious results:

Vs. 2 – Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

As Christians, are there ever times when we can in good conscience disobey or disregard the laws of the land?

In **Acts 5:29** – It is written: **“Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than men!’”**

The Jewish court - called the Sanhedrin - ordered the Apostles that they could not teach in the Name of Jesus. (Acts 5:27-28)

It was to that order that Peter and the other Apostles gave that reply. **“We must Obey God rather than men.”**

And so are there any laws which as Christians we **“Must obey God rather than men”**

*Example: **Thou shalt not kill.*** (Exodus 20:13; Romans 13:9)

When the government says that it is OK to kill an unborn child, as Christians, we must disagree. We always need to look at Scripture.

As the Apostle Paul was writing to the congregation in Rome, about 57 A.D. there was a man named Nero who ruled in Rome from 54-68 A.D.

To give some insight into the character of Nero: He had his mother – Agrippina – put to death as well as his wife Octavia and his foster brother – Britannicus.

Nero then blamed the Christians for the fire in Rome in 64 A.D. and as a result, many Christians were sent to the Coliseum to be killed by lions.

With that type of atmosphere occurring in ROME at the time, how would you have felt as a Christian?

Imagine being a Christian in Rome at that time and then the Apostle Paul comes along and writes to the congregation of believers in Rome:

Vs. 1 – Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

Vs. 2 – Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

So what did the Christians do?
Many of them fled.

And wherever they went – what did they take with them? - The Word of God!
God used an evil ruler to get the message of salvation in Christ Jesus - out to the nations!

Have you always obeyed the authorities? Or are you rebellious?
Have you always obeyed your parents perfectly? Have you always obeyed your teachers perfectly?
Have you always obeyed the police? Have you always obeyed the governor?
Have you always obeyed the president?

God tells us in **Deuteronomy 18:13** – **You must be blameless before the Lord your God.**
And it is repeated in the Sermon on the Mount: **Matt. 5:48** – **Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.**”

My friends in Christ, the only way that you and I can enter heaven is by being **perfect** in every way, in every thought, word and deed.

God tells us through **James 2:10** – **“Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”**

And our sin goes much deeper than just our outward actions and our thoughts. We have a sinful nature that we have inherited from our parents. As much as we love our parents, God tells us through the Psalmist:

Ps. 51:5 – **“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”**

And so how is it that we can have any hope now in this life and in the life to come?

It is only in Jesus Christ our Risen and Victorious Savior.

II Corinthians 5:21 – **God made Him – Christ Jesus – Who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”**

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament passage found in **Isaiah 53:6** – **“We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”**

For all the times that we have failed to obey those in authority, Jesus submitted on our behalf, and kept the law perfectly every time, all the time.

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed to His heavenly Father, “**Not My Will but Thy Will be done.**” (Luke 22:42; Matt. 26:39; Mk. 14:36)

Jesus submitted to the Roman Governor – Pontius Pilate as He allowed Himself to be beaten, mocked and crucified.

On the Cross Jesus submitted to the authority of His Heavenly Father as He said. “**Father, into Your Hands I commit My Spirit.**” (Lk. 23:46)

Jesus then submitted unto death as He breathed His last and gave up the ghost. (John 19:30)

And we know that the payment that Jesus made for the sin of the WHOLE World (John 3:16; I John 2:1-2) was acceptable in the eyes of God because on Easter Sunday Jesus rose from the dead.

All the demons of hell could not hold Jesus down. Death could not hold Jesus down. (Mark 16:1-8; I Peter 3:18-20)

All the times that you failed to obey the authorities perfectly, Jesus DID!

What does this mean for you? Your sins are forgiven. (I John 1:7; I John 2:12)

It means that you have heaven where there is no more sin or death or pain. (Revelation 21:1-7)

And we can look forward to those new glorified bodies. (Philippians 3:20-21; Job 19:25-27)

And so why do we obey the authorities?

Vs. 5 – Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

We do not go the speed limit because we are afraid of a ticket, but because God wants us to. **AMEN**

The perfect life of Christ Jesus becomes ours through that *receiving organ* of faith. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

And the saving faith in Christ was created in your heart by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God in the Gospel in Word and Sacrament.

Romans 10:17 – “Consequently faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the Word of Christ.”

THEME: Who Establishes All Authorities?