

**NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**Sermon: God Is the Sovereign Authority, Part 4**  
**Topic: The Authorities That Exist Are Appointed by God.**  
**Scripture Text: Romans 13:1**  
**1/5/2021**

**Romans 13:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> 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.**

Today we will focus on the part “2” of Romans 13:1  
***Romans 13:1c* and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.**

“God is a perfect God but He deals with imperfect people.”

**<sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ORDINANCE of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.**

This was the emphasis point given by those that misused and abused the scriptures. No one wants to resist God nor be in fear of judgment for doing so.

*Romans 13:2 (ESV) <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the **authorities** resists **what God has appointed**, and those who resist will incur judgment.*

*Romans 13:2 (NIV84) <sup>2</sup> Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against **what God has instituted**, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.*

Let me give my understanding of this passage using scripture and from more educated and knowledgeable bible scholars than I am. I will refer to a few commentaries. Not all the commentaries are as clear as others. I suggest you look some up yourself. Here is a good place to start.

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/romans/13-2.htm>

**John McArthur** is usually the first one I go to. Here is his comment on the verse.

**13:2 resists the ordinance of God.** Since all government is God-ordained, disobedience is rebellion against God.<sup>1</sup>

*The MacArthur Study Bible*

I think he could have been a little clearer but, as I have said, I agree that all **government authority is from God** but, I do not agree that all **IN authority** are set up by God.

*Hosea 8:3–4 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> Israel has rejected the good; The enemy will pursue him. <sup>4</sup> “They set up kings, but not by Me;*

**Barnes Commentary** is another one that I turn to a lot. Here are his comment on the verse;

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<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [\*The MacArthur Study Bible\*](#) (electronic ed., p. 1718). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

Whosoever therefore resisteth ... - That is, they who rise up against "government itself;" who seek anarchy and confusion; and who oppose the regular execution of the laws. **It is implied, however, that those laws shall not be such as to violate the rights of conscience, or oppose the laws of God.**

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/romans/13-2.htm>

This is what I believe. He gives a comment but includes an exception. Currently the country is experiencing our current President, rising us against the Constitution of the United States, laws ordained by God, in an attempt to oppose the regular execution of the laws governing an election.

**Benson commentary** is one I use frequently; I include it to look at a different view or support others. Here are his comments on the verse;

**Wherefore, since the power of which the apostle speaks in both verses is the form of government, and not the rulers of the country,** the subjection enjoined in the first verse is not an unlimited passive obedience to rulers in things sinful, but an obedience to the **wholesome laws, enacted for the good of the community by common consent, or by those who, according to the constitution of the state,** have the power of enacting laws. **To these good laws the people are to give obedience,** without examining by what title the magistrates, who execute these laws, hold their power; and even without considering whether the religion professed by the magistrates be true or false.

For the same reason the opposition to, and resistance of the power, forbidden in [Romans 13:2](#), is an opposition to, and resistance of the established government, by disobeying the wholesome laws of the state; **or by attempting to overturn the government from a factious disposition,** or from ill-will to the persons in power, **or from an ambitious desire to possess the government ourselves.**

*Benson Commentary*

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/romans/13-2.htm>

This commentary is more in-depth. There are many points to look at here. First, I believe it applies to the general population and to their leaders. Here are a few:

1. The term "Government" applies more to the form of government, and not the rulers of the country (like presidents)
2. This first verse does mean to give an unlimited passive obedience to rulers in things sinful, but an obedience to the wholesome laws, enacted for the good of the community by common consent, or by those who, according to the constitution of the state, ...
3. **Attempting to overturn the government from a factious disposition,** or from ill-will to the persons in power, **or from an ambitious desire to possess the government ourselves.**

A few definitions may be in order here not that many of you don't know what "factious" means.

Factionous - of or relating to faction: Synonym: Seditious

**Faction** -: a party or group (as within a government) that is often contentious or self-seeking:

This is what America is experiencing right now. A “Faction” of government is seeking to overturn the lawful votes of millions of people in order to change the outcome of the election in order for their candidate to be President.

The last commentary I will refer to is “**Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible**”

Here are his comments on the verse;

“Resisteth the ordinance of God”, the will and appointment of God, whose pleasure it is that there should be such an office, and that men should be subject to it. This is not to be understood, **as if magistrates were above the laws**, and had a lawless power to do as they will without opposition; for **they are under the law, and liable to the penalty of it, in case of disobedience**, as others; and when they make their own will a law, or exercise a lawless tyrannical power, in defiance of the laws of God, and of the land, to the endangering of the lives, liberties, and properties of subjects, they may be resisted, as Saul was by the people of Israel, when he would have taken away the life of Jonathan for the breach of an arbitrary law of his own, and that too without the knowledge of it, .

Gill's Exposition of the Entire

Bible

<https://biblehub.com/commentaries/romans/13-2.htm>

Magistrates/ rulers are not above the law, they in fact, are liable to the penalty of the law. There is a very old saying that says, “what is good for the goose is good for the gander”. This applies to God’s ordinances. David was penalized for his sins, Ahab was also, other kings got leprosy and some were killed.

David ran from Saul but did not rise up against him.

*1 Samuel 26:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand **against the LORD’s anointed**. But please, take now the spear and the jug of water that are by his head, and let us go.”*

The exception to this application is this. In the time of David, the government was a monarchy. Praise God, we in America live in a democracy appointed by God. The Authority of our government is the US constitution that allows the peaceful change in leadership by the will of the voting people.

Anyone who rebels against that authority (the US constitution) is rebelling against **what God has instituted**, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

If there are those that cannot see what the current administration (2020) is doing in this regard, they are among those that refuse to see.

Message Scriptures: **Romans 13:1**, *Romans 13:2*, *Hosea 8:3–4*, *1 Samuel 26:11*

END