



Sermon Discussion Guide

September 21st, 2025 | Romans 13:1-7 | Pastor Greg Doty

Series // Transformed : Romans 12-16

Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Greg started with a quick disclaimer on what this passage is not about. He explained that his passage is not about which political or socio-economic system was the correct one. Instead, this passage explains how Christians should live in the current situation they find themselves in. In the Roman church, there are people with two different backgrounds. On one hand, you had the Jewish background believers who believed the Roman government was evil and oppressive, and they believed it needed to be overthrown. You also had the gentile believers, of Roman background, who admired the government and respected it. Paul addresses both of those groups in this passage, and Pastor Greg's sermon had three quick points: the governing authorities (according to this passage) are instituted by God, an instrument of God, but they are not God. Paul explains that our citizenship in heaven does not exempt us from following the laws of the place where we live. God has established these governing authorities, and to resist them is to resist God. Pastor Greg went on to explain that the government is an instrument of God. Specifically, Paul calls rulers servants of God who are put in place to restrain evil and promote good. God institutes the government authorities as an instrument of God's justice to protect people and restrain evil. Lastly, Paul makes a point through omission in the last few verses. He calls believers to pay taxes, show respect, and honor their governing authorities. However, what he does not say is that they should worship the government. Romans worshiped the Emperor and viewed him as a deity. God institutes government, but government is not God. Our allegiance as believers is first and foremost to God; we are also called to live as faithful witnesses under the governing authorities he has instituted.

Discussion Questions:

- How does seeing government as an "instrument of God" change your perspective on its role in society?
- In what ways have you experienced government as a force for order and good?

- What dangers arise when people treat government or leaders as the ultimate authority (ancient Rome or today)?
- How can Christians faithfully honor and respect the government without idolizing it?
- Where do you see the temptation today to put too much trust in political leaders or systems?
- How can your attitude toward government be a witness to the gospel in a divided culture?
- What practical steps can you take this week to show respect, live peaceably, and put trust in God above earthly powers?